THE Touchstone of Sincerity: OR, THE SIGNS of GRACE, AND Symptoms of Hypocrisie; Opened in A Practical Treatise Upon Revelations III 17, 18

Being the Second Part of

The SAINT INDEED

By JOHN FLAVELL, Minister of Christ. Devon.

בקשו את יהוה כל ענוי הארץ אשר משפטו פעלו
Zephan. 2. 1, 3. דרשו צדק

Scrutamini vosipsos, scrutamini; antequam pariat decretum, &c.

Legendis libris non quærenda scientiam, sed sapientia. Bernard.

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THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

READER,

AMONG the difficulties and severities of true Religion, the faithful searching, and diligent keeping of our hearts are found in the first and highest rank of difficulties; these two take up the main work of a Christian betwixt them, hic labor hoc opus est. I had hopes that these Essaies for the searching of the heart, might much sooner have followed my former * indeed. for keeping the heart: but providence hath reserved it for the fittest season.

* A Saint

The Epistle to the Reader.

It comes to thy hand, Reader, *in a day of straits and fears, a dark and gloomy season, when the Nations about us are made drunk with their own blood, and filled with the cup of astonishment; In a day when the Cup is ready to pass unto us, and a storm seems to be rising in the fears of many, and threatning the Protestant interest in these reformed Nations. Some Men very considerable for Piety and Learning from that Scripture, Rev. 13. 3. The deadly wound, (viz. that given the beast by the Reformation) was healed, have concluded that Popery will once more over run the reformed Nations; and one of great renown in all the Churches of Christ foretelling this furious (but short) storm, comforts the People of God with this, that it is like to fall heaviest upon the Worshippers in the* outward Court, *namely, the formal Professors of the times.*

Ob! How much is every Man now concerned to have his estate and condition well cleared, and to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure!

It should both amaze and grieve a pious mind, to see how some ingenious Persons can sit with unwearied patience and pleasure racking their brains upon some dry School Problem, *or some nice* Mathematical Point; *whilst no Reasons or Perswasions can prevail with them to*

spend

spend one serious hour in the search and study of their own hearts.

It was the saying of the great Cicero, Li-ter omnibus omnes opes concesserim, ut mihi liceat, vi nullâ interpellante, isto mo-do literis vivere. *I would give all the Wealth in the World that I might wholly live in my Studies, and have nothing to hinder me. What a brave offer had that been, if Heaven and the clearing of a title to it had been the subject-matter of those studies!* Crede mihi, extingui dulce esset, Mathematicarum artium studio, *saith another,* (i. e.) *Believe me, it were a sweet death to dye in the study of the* Mathematical Arts: *And I should be apt to believe it too, did I not know that eternal Judgment immediately follows death; and that they who stand at the door of eternity have higher matters to mind than* Mathematical niceties. *To discern the harmonies and proportions in nature is pleasant, but to discern the harmony and proportion of the* Signs *of Grace laid down in the* Word, *with the* Works *of Grace wrought in our* Souls, *is a far more pleasant and necessary imployment, and to be extinguished in such a work as this were a lovely death indeed;* Blessed is that Servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

My Friends, a day of trouble is near, a dying hour approacheth us, and when our Eye strings

and Heart-strings are breaking, when we are ta-king the last grasp *of Christ and the Promises, you will then know to what purpose those hours spent in such work as this were.* Search your selves, yea search your selves before the decree bring forth, *as that text may be read,* Zeph. 2. 1, 2. *Enter into thy Chamber, Christian, and shut thy door; stay close to this imployment thou art here directed to; and however times shall govern, whether it be fair or foul weather abroad, thou shalt never repent such an expence of thy time;* Nusquam requiem inveni, nisi in libro & claustro; *said a devout soul once. I am never better, than when I am at my Book, or on my knees.*

This may seem but a dull melancholy life to the brisk and aiery Spirits of these times; but let us be content with it as it is, and leave them (if we cannot have their company) to their sportiveness and frolicks, never once grudging them their short and dear bought pleasures. Assurance that sin is pardoned, and Christ is ours; with the unspeakable joys that are inseparably connected therewith is that White Stone, and new Name, which none knows but he that receives it; *for no words can possibly signifie to another what that soul tasts and feels in such an hour as that is.*

And be not discouraged at the difficulty of obtaining it, this White Stone *is no* Philosophers Stone, *which no Man could ever say, he had in*

his

his own hand, for many a Christian hath really found it in waiting upon the Lord by Prayer, and diligently searching the Scriptures and his own heart.

Reader, The time will come when they that scoff at the serious diligence of the Saints, and break many a pleasant Jest upon the most solemn and awful things in Religion, will tremble when they shall hear the Midnight-Cry, Behold the Bridegroom cometh; *and see the Lamps of all Vain and Formal Professors expire, and none admitted into the Marriage, but such whose Lamps are furnished with* Oyl (i. e.) *such whose professions and duties are enlivened and maintained by vital Springs and Principles of real Grace within them.*

It is a very remarkable Story that Melchior Adams *records in the life of* Gobelinus, *That a little before his time there was a Play set forth at* Henach *in* Germany, *of the* Wise *and* Foolish Virgins, *wherein the* Virgin Mary, *who was one of the Five Saints that represented the Wise Virgins, was brought in with the rest, telling the* Foolish Virgins *that cryed to her for Oyl, that it was too late: and then others representing the* Foolish Virgins, *fell a weeping and making most bitter Lamentations.*

Melch. Adams in vita Gobelini personæ vindic. Anno. 1420.

Hereat Prince Frederick (*who was one of the Spectators*) *greatly amazed, cryed out,* Quid est fides nostra Christiana, si neque Maria neque alia Sancta exorari potest, &c. *What is our faith worth, and to what purpose are all our good works, if neither* Mary, *nor any other* Saint *can help us! And such was his consternation, that it threw him into a sore and violent disease, which ended in an* Apoplex, *whereof he died about four daies after.*

If the representation of these things in a Play *ended the Life of so great a Man, so tragically; Oh think with thy self,* Reader, *what will the effects of the Lords real appearance in the clouds of Heaven, and the mourning and wailing of the Tribes of the Earth in that day be? Think I say and think again, and again, what the dismal effects of such a sight and sound will be upon all that neglect serious preparation themselves, and scoff at them that do prepare to meet the Lord.*

The design of this Manual *is to bring every Mans Gold to the Touchstone and Fire, I mean every Mans Grace to the tryal of the word, that thereby we may know what we are, what we have, and what we must expect and trust to at the Lord's coming. I pretend not to any gift of* discerning Spirits. *Such an extraordinary gift there once was in the Church and very necessary for those times (wherein Satan

tan *was so busie, and the* Canon *of* Scripture *not compleated) which the* Apostle *calls the Gift of* discerning Spirits, 1 *Cor.* 12. 10. *and some are of Opinion that by vertue of this Gift,* Peter *discerned the Hypocrisie of* Ananias *and* Saphira, *but whatever that Gift was, it is utterly ceased now; no Man can pretend to it, but the Ordinary aids and assistances of the Spirit are with us still, and the lively* Oracles *are among us still, to them we may freely go for resolution of all doubts, and decision of perplexed cases: and thus we may discern our own Spirits, though we want the extraordinary gift of discerning other Mens Spirits.*

I have little to say of this Treatise *in thy Hands, more than that it is well aimed, and designed, however it be managed: the Ear tries words, as the Mouth tasteth Meat; these things will relish according to the Palates it meets with.*

It is not the pleasing, but profiting of Men that I have herein laboured for. I know of nothing in it that is like to wound the upright, or slightly heal the Hypocrite, by crying peace, peace, when there is no peace. Scripture light hath been my Cynosura, *and with that thread in my hand, I have followed the search of Hypocrisie through the Labyrinths of the Heart. Some assistance I hope I have had also from Experience; for Scripture and Experience are such

such Relatives, and the tye betwixt them so discernable, as nothing in Nature can be more so. What we feel in our hearts, we might have read in the Scriptures before ever we felt it.

That the Blessing of God may go forth with it, and accompany it to thy Soul, Reader, is the hearts desire and prayer of

Thine and the Churches

Servant in Christ,

John Flavell

TH

THE Touchstone of Sincerity: OR, THE SIGNS of GRACE, AND *Symptoms of Hypocrisie*,

Opened in a Treatise upon

REVEL. III. xvii, xviii.

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing: And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me GOLD TRIED *in the* FIRE, *that thou mayest be rich*, &c.

CHAP. I.

Wherein the Text is opened, and the Doctrines propounded.

ALthough the *Revelation* be a *compendium* of intricate Visions and obscure Prophecies, containing almost as many mysteries as words: yet that cloud overshadows the Prophetic

Tot mysteria quot verba. Hieron.

part only; which begins where this Chapter (with the doctrinal part) ends: here the Waters are found no deeper than in other places of Scripture; but if we go a little farther they become an overflowing flood: hitherto we touch ground, but a ſtep farther delivers us into the deeps, which are above the head of the talleſt Chriſtians: here the Spirit ſpeaks *doctrinally*, and perſpicuouſly; but in the following Chapters *myſtically*, and in great obſcurity.

Seven *Epiſtles* are found in this Doctrinal part, immediately dictated from Heaven and ſent by *John* to the *Seven Churches of Aſia*, to inſtruct, correct, encourage, and confirm them, as their ſeveral caſes required.

My Text falls in the laſt *Epiſtle*, ſent to the Church of *Laodicea*; the worſt, and moſt degenerate of all the reſt. The beſt had their defects, and infirmities; but this laboured under the moſt dangerous diſeaſe of all. The faireſt face of the ſeven had ſome *ſpots*, but a dangerous diſeaſe ſeems to have invaded the very heart of this.

Not that all were equally guilty, but the greateſt part (from which the whole is denominated) were *lukewarm* profeſſors; who had a name to live, but were dead, who being never throughly engaged in Religion, fully embraced that principle of the Gnoſtics which made it *ἀδιάφορον* a matter of in-

ifferency to own or deny Christ in time of erſecution. The moſt ſaving Doctrine that me Profeſſors are acquainted with. This kewarm temper Christ hated, he was ſick them, and loathed their indifferency: *I iſh* (ſaith he) *v.* 16. *thou wert either cold or t*; an expreſſion of the ſame amount with at in 1 *King.* 18.21. *how long halt you between wo opinions?* And is manifeſtly tranſlated om the qualities of *ater*, which is either *ld*, or *hot*; or *luke-arm*, a middle temper etwixt both, & more aucious to the ſto-ach than either of he former. *Cold* is the omplexion and natu-l temper of thoſe at are wholly aliena-d and eſtranged from Christ and Religion. *Hot*, is the gracious temper of thoſe that now and love Jeſus Chriſt in an excelling egree. *Lukewarm*, or *tepid*, is the temper of hoſe who have too much Religion to be e-eemed Carnal, and too little to be truly piritual; a generation that is too *politick* to enture much, and yet ſo *fooliſh* as to loſe all: ey are loth to forſake Truth *wholly*, and ore loth to follow it too *cloſely*: the *form* of eligion they affect as an *honour*, the *power* of they judge a *burden*.

Frigidos vocat planè à Chriſto alienos. Fervidos, verâ Chriſti cognitione in excellenti gradu præditos. Tepidos, qui cum Chriſtiani dici velint, nec cauſam religionis ſerio agunt, nec vitam confeſſioni conformem dignamque ducunt. Sol. Glaſſ. Rhet. Sacra par. 3. p. 165.

This

This is that temper which the Lord hat
and this was the Disease of *Laodicea*, whi
Christ the great and only Heart-*Anatom*
and Soul-*Physician* discovers in *v.* 17. and p
scribes a cure for it in *v.* 18. So that t
words resolve themselves into two parts: *v*

{*First*, A faithful discovery, } the Disea
{*Secondly*, A proper remedy, } of *Laodic*

1. *First*, Their disease is faithfully disc
vered to them, both in its symptomes, caus
and aggravation.

First, Its *Symptome*, an unconcerned, i
different regardless spirit in matters of Rel
gion; nor hot, nor cold; the true temper
Formal Professors, who never engaged them
selves throughly and heartily in the ways
God, but can take, or leave as times govern
and worldly interest come to be concerned

Secondly, Its cause and root, which is th
defect and want of the Truth, and Power
inward Grace; noted in these expressions
Thou art wretched, and miserable, poor, blind, an
naked; (i. e.) thou art destitute of a rea
principle, a solid work of Grace; these fiv
Epithets do all point at one and the sam
thing; namely, the defectiveness and rotten
ness of their foundation. The two first, ὅτι
ταλαίπωρος καὶ ὁ ἐλεεινός, *wretched* and *miserable*
are more general, concluding them in a la
condition, a very sinful and lamentable e
state

ate: the three laſt, πτωχὸς, τυφλὸς & γυμνὸς, *poor, blind* and *naked*, are more particu-, pointing at thoſe grand defects, and ws in the ſoundation, which made their ndition ſo wretched and miſerable.

Firſt, *poor*, that is, void of Righteouſneſs, d true Holineſs be- re God; theſe are e true riches of Chri- ans, and whoſo ants them, is poor, and miſerable; how ch ſoever he be in gifts of the mind, or aſures of the earth.

πτωχὸς *deſtitutus Juſtitiâ, & Sanctitate verâ coram Deo.* Grotius.

Secondly, *Blind*, (i. e.) without ſpiritual umination, and ſo ither knowing their eaſe, nor their reme- ; the evil of Sin, or neceſſity of Chriſt. *rham in Loc.*

τυφλὸς *Nec morbum ſciens, nec remedium.*

Thirdly, *Naked*, without *Chriſt*, and his ghteouſneſs. Sin is Souls ſhame and kedneſs, Chriſts pure d perfect Righteouſ- s is its covering, or *garment*: this they nted how richly ſoever their bodies were rmed. Theſe were *Laodiceans*, (i. e.) a juſt, ighteous People; (according to the no- on of that word) whoſe garments with ich they covered themſelves, were made the home-ſpun thread of their own hteouſneſs.

γυμνὸς *Carens juſtitiâ quæ veſtitus eſt Chriſtianorum.* Parcus.

Third-

Thirdly, The diſeaſe of *Laodicea* is he opened to them in its *aggravations. Thou ſai I am rich, and increaſed with goods, and ha need of nothing; but knoweſt not*, &c.

To be really graceleſs, and Chriſtleſs is miſerable condition; but to be ſo, and y confidently perſwad of the contrary, is mo miſerable: to have t very ſymptoms of Death upon us, and y tell thoſe that pity us, we are as well as the is lamentable indeed.

Nil miſerius miſero non miſeranteſeipſum.

O the efficacy of a Spiritual Deluſio This was their *diſeaſe*, *graceleſneſs*, and t *aggravation of it*, was their *ſenſleſneſs*.

2. *Secondly*, We have a proper reme preſcribed, *v.* 18. *I counſel thee to buy of gold tried in the fire, that thou mayeſt be ri* &c. In which we have to conſider, Fir what is preſcribed for the cure. Second where it is to be had. Thirdly, how to obtained.

Firſt, What are the remedies preſcribe and they are three; *Gold*, *White-rayment*, a *Eye-ſalve*. Firſt, *Gold* the cure of Povert yea, *Gold tried in the Fire*, (*i. e.*) grace th hath been variouſly proved already, and t more it is proved, the more its truth will conſpicuous. The next is *White-rayment*, t remedy againſt nakedneſs. And laſtly *E ſalve*, the effectual cure of blindneſs. Und

these choice *Metaphors*, more choice and
cellent things are shadowed, even spiritu-
Graces, real Holiness, more precious than
old. Christs imputed Righteousness, the
hest garment in all the Wardrobe of Hea-
n; and spiritual illumination, the most ex-
llent *Collyrium* or *Eye-salve* that ever was
can be applyed to the mental eye or un-
rstanding of Man in this World.

Secondly, Where these precious remedies
y be had, and you find Christ hath the
onopoly of them all;
of me, saith Christ
the Text; he is the
pository of all Graces.

Hoc μονοπώλιον est Christi extra quod nulla est salus.

gels, Ministers, Ordinances, cannot fur-
h you with them, without Christ.

Thirdly, How they may be obtained
m him; *buy of me*; on this place *Estius*,
l others build their Doctrine of Merit;
ich is to build a superstructure of Hay
l Stubble upon a foundation of Gold. The
gence of the very Text it self destroys
h conceits: for what have they that are
r, wretched, miserable, and want all
gs, to give as a price, or by way of me-
for those inestimable treasures of Grace?
ing therefore in this place, can signifie or
nd no more than the acquisition, com-
ing, or obtaining these things from *Jesus*
st in the use of such means and methods

as

as he hath appointed, and in the use of the we merit Grace no more, than the *Pati* merits of his *Physician* by coming to hi and carefully following his prescriptions the use of such *Medicaments* as he free gives him: and that place, *Isa.* 55. 1. (fro which this Phrase seems to be borrowe fully clears it; *He that hath no Money, let h come and buy Wine and Milk, without Mon and without price.*

From all which, these three Observatio fairly offer themselves to us.

Doct. 1. *That many Professours of Relig are under very great and dangerous mist in their profession.*

Doct. 2. *That true Grace is exceeding preci and greatly enriches the soul that possesseth*

Doct. 3. *That only is to be accounted true Gr which is able to endure all those trials appo ed, or permitted for the discovery of it.*

The first Doctrine naturally rises out the scope of the Text, which is to awa and convince unsound Professors.

The second from the use the Holy Gh makes of the best and choicest things in ture, to shadow forth the inestimable wo and preciousness of grace.

And the Third from that particular, and ſt ſignificant *Metaphor* of *Gold tried in the e*; by which I here underſtand, a real d ſolid work of grace, evidencing it ſelf be ſo, in all the proofs and tryals that are de of it; for whatſoever is probational grace, and puts its ſoundneſs and ſincerito the teſt, is that to it which Fire is to old: in this ſenſe it is uſed in Scripture, *al.* 66. 10. *Thou haſt tried us as Silver is ed*: and *Zach.* 13. 9. *I will bring the third rt through the Fire and will refine them as ver is refined, and try them as gold is tried.* that whatſoever it is which examines and es Grace, whether it be ſound, and ſinre, that is the *Fire Chriſt* here ſpeaks of; d ſuch grace as abides theſe trials, is the old here intended.

CHAP. II.

herein the firſt Doctrine is opened and improved briefly as a preliminary diſcourſe to the principal ſubject herein deſigned.

oct. 1. *That many profeſſors of Religion are under very great and dangerous miſtakes in their profeſſion.*

CT. I. ALL Flattery is dangerous, Self-flattery is more dangeus, but Self-flattery in the buſineſs of Salvaon is the moſt dangerous of all. To

To pretend to the good we know we ha
not, is *gross hypocrisie*: to repine and perswa
our selves of the good we have not, thou
we think we have it, is *formal hypocrisie*; a
this was the case of those Self-deceivers
the Text.

My design in this discourse is not to sha
the well-built hopes of any Man, or be
groundless Jealousies; but to discover the
al dangerous flaws in the foundation of m
ny Mens hopes for Heaven: every thin
as its foundation is, and *debile fundament*
fallit opus: that failing all fails.

There is a twofold Self-suspicion or f
in Gods own People. The one is a fear
caution, awaking the Soul to the use of
preventive means for avoiding danger; t
is *Laudable*. The other a groundless suspici
of reigning hypocrisie, tending only to d
spondency; this is *Culpable*: by the form
the soul is guarded against *danger*, by the
ter it is betrayed into needless trouble; a
debarred from *peace*.

Good Men have sometimes more fear th
they ought, and Wicked Men have less th
they ought: the former do sometimes sh
their eyes against the *fair evidences* of th
own *graces*, the latter shut their eyes again
the *sad evidences* of their *Sin* and *Misery*. T
is an evil in both, but not equally dangero
for he that shuts his Eyes against his ow
grac

ces and privileges, loseth but his peace &
mfort for a time; but he that shuts his
es against the evidences of his Sin and
sery looseth his precious soul to all eterni-
! of this latter sort of *Self-deceivers* the
orld is full, and these are the Men I am
ncerned with in this point.

O that some men had less trouble! and
that some had more! If the *foolish Virgins*
d been less *confident*, they had certainly
en more *safe*, *Matth.* 25. If those glorious
ofessors in *Matth.* 7. 22. had not shut their
es against their own *hypocrisie*, Christ had
t shut against them the door of Salvation
d Glory. *Ananias* and *Saphira*; *Hymeneus*,
d *Philetus*; *Alexander* and *Demas*: with
ultitudes more of that sort, are the sad in-
nces and proofs of this point. It is said,
v. 30. 12. *There is a generation that is pure
their own eyes, and yet is not washed from
ir filthiness.* Through what false Spectacles
the Men of that Generation look upon
eir own Souls? The Men of that Genera-
n are multiplied in this Generation: ne-
r was any age over-run with a generation
vain, Self-couzening, formal Professors, as
s Generation is.

Three things I shall here endeavour to do.
(1.) To give evidence beyond contradi-
on to this sad truth; That among Profes-
s are found many Self-deceivers.

(2.) To

(2.) To assign the true causes and
sons why it is so. And,

(3.) Improve it in those practical i
rences the point affords.

SECT. II.

THat there are multitudes of such self-
ceivers among Professors, will appe
1. First, by this, that there are ev
where to be found many more *professors*, t
Converts. Unregenerate professours, whose
ligion is but the effect of Education. C
flagging by the favour of an early Provide
was the first comer, it first bespake them
it self; these are Christians of an hum
Creation, rather born, than new-born bel
ers. Now, all *these* are self-deceived, and h
ing to damnation, under the efficacy
strong delusion; *for if a man think himse*
be somebody, when he is nothing, he decei
himself, saith the *Apostle*, *Gal.* 6. 3. Su
our birth-priviledge, without the new bi
is *nothing*; *yea*, worse than *nothing*, as to
last, and great account; that which sta
for *a great summ* in our *Arithmetick*, it's
thing, it is but a *Cypher* you see, in God's.
cept a man be born again, (say the lips of tr
he cannot see the Kingdom of God, Joh. 3.

Poor self-deceivers, ponder those wor
Christ; you have hitherto thought y
civil *education*, your dead and *heartless* d
and

ough to denominate you Christians before od; but go now, and learn what that Scripre meaneth; and be assured, you must perience another manner of *conversion*, or le it is impossible for you to escape eternal *mnation*.

2. Secondly, It is too manifest by this, that any professours are only acquainted with e *externals* of Religion; and all their duis are no more but a complyance of the tward man with the commands of God: is is the superficial Religion which deceives d betrays multitudes into eternal misery. rue Religion seats it self in the inward an, and acts effectually upon the vital powrs: killing sin in the heart, and purging its esigns and delights from carnality and selhness; engaging the heart for God, and tting it as a bow in its full bent for him e approaches we make to him: but how de are many Professours acquainted with ese things!

Alas! if this be all we have to stand upn, how dangerous a station is it! what is ternal conformity, but an artificial imitaon of that which only lives in the souls of od men? Thus was *Jehu* deceived; he did any acts of external obedience to Gods mmand, *but Jehu took no heed to walk in e way of the Lord God of Israel with his heart*, Kings 10. 31. and this was his overthrow.

This also was the ruine of those so m
lists, *Ezek.* 33. 31. they came and sate
fore the Lord as his people; The word w
to them as a lovely song; mightily charm
with the modulation of the *Prophets* voi
and his lively gestures; but all the wh
their hearts went after their covetousnes:
what abundance of such pharisaical, sup
ficial Religion is every where to be found

3. Thirdly, it appears by this, that eve
tryal made by sufferings upon professou
blows away multitudes like dry leaves
Autumn, by a stormy wind; many fall fro
their *own stedfastnes* in shaking times: pr
perity multiplies vain Professours, and a
versity purges the *Church* of them. *Then sh
many be offended*, Mat. 24. 10.

This the Scripture every where *marks* a
symptome of Hypocrisie, Psal. 78. 8 *A gener
tion that set not their heart aright: and wh
spirit was not stedfast with God*, 1 John 2. 1
*But they went out, that they might be made m
wifest, that they were not of us*, Matth. 13. 2
*For when tribulation or persecution ariseth b
cause of the word; by and by he is offended*: b
should one have told them in the days
their first profession, that all their zeal an
labour in Religion would have ended in th
it is like they would have replyed as *Haz
el* to the man of God, 2 King. 8. 13. *B
what is thy servant a dog, that he should do t
gre*

at thing! quantum mutatus ab illo?

Oh how unlike is their dark and dirty e-
ning, to their glorious and hopeful morn-
g! these Professors have more of the *Moon*
n of the *Sun*; little light, less heat; but
ny changes: they deceive many, yea, they
ceive themselves, but cannot deceive God.
ring the calm, what a flourish do they
ke! and with what gallantry do they
! by and by you may hear *horrendas tem-
tates*, and soon after you may see, *flenda
fragia*, a dreadful shipwrack, after a fu-
us storm; and no wonder, for they
nted that ἴδιον ςηριγμὸν, that
last and establishment in 1 Pet. 3. 17.
emselves that would have kept them tite
d stable.

4. Fourthly, It is too apparent by this, that
ny Professours secretly indulge and shelter
oved lusts under the wings of their pro-
sion. This like a worm at the root will
her and kill them at last, how fragrant
ver they may seem to be for a season.
leon had seventy *Sons*, and one *Bastard*;
that one *Bastard* was the death of all his
enty *Sons*.

Some men have many excellent gifts,
d perform multitudes of duties, but one
ret sin indulged and allowed, will destroy
m all at last. He that is *partial* as to the
rtification of his sins, is undoubtedly *hy-*

poeritical in his profession. If *Davids* eviden
was good for his integrity, surely such Pr
fessours will never clear themselves of hyp
crisie. *I was also upright before him, and k
my self from mine iniquity*, saith he, *Psal.*
23. this is the right eye, and right hand whi
every sincere Christian must pluck out, a
cut off, *Matth.* 5. 29, 30.

Which is a *Metaphor* from *Chirurge*
whose manner it is when the whole is
danger by any part, to cut it off, *ne pars s
cera trahatur*; lest all perish.

Their suppressing some lusts raiseth th
confidence, the indulging of one razeth
foundation of their hopes, and thus they
ceive themselves.

5. Fifthly, This also manifests the self-
ceits of many *professours*, That the secret
ties of Religion, or at least the secret int
course of the soul with God in them, i
secret hid from the knowledge and expe
ence of many *professours*.

To attend the Ordinances of God in
seasons of them they know, to pray in th
families at the stated hours thereof th
know; but to retire from all the world i
their *Closets*, and there to pour out their he
before the Lord, they know not.

To feel somewhat within, paining th
like an empty hungry stomach until th
have eaten that hidden Manna, that br

secret; I mean refreshed their souls with al communion with the Lord there; this a Mystery locked up from the acquainnce of many that call themselves *Christians*; d yet this is made a *Characteristical note* of sincere Christian by *Christ* himself in *Matth.* 6.

O Reader, If thy heart were right with od, and thou dist not cheat thy self with vain profession, thou wouldst have frequent siness with God, which thou wouldst be th thy dearest friend, or the wife of thy bsome should be privy to: *Non est religio i omnia patent.* Religion doth not lay all pen to the eyes of men. Observed duties aintain our *credit*, but secret duties mainin our *life*. It was the saying of an Heathen bout his secret correspondency with his iend, What need the world be acquainted ith it? *thou and I are Theatre enough to each her*: There are enclosed pleasures in Relion, which none but renewed spiritual souls o feelingly understand.

6. Lastly, How many more profess Religin in these dayes, than ever made Religion eir business! *Philosophy* tells us there is a τὸ ον, and a πάρεργον, a *main-business*; and a byusiness, the same is found in Religion also.

There are *that give themselves to the Lord*, Cor. 8. 5. whose conversation or trade is heaven, *Phil.* 3. 18. the end or scope of

whose life is Christ, *Heb.* 13. 7, 8. who gi
Religion the precedency both in time a
affection, *Psal.* 5. 3. *Rom.* 12. 11. who are co
stant and indefatigable in the work of t
Lord, 1 *Cor.* 15. 58.

And there are also that take up Religi
rather for *ostentation*, than for an *occupati*
who never mind the duties of Religion, b
when they have nothing else to do; a
when their outward man is engaged in t
duties of it, yet their heart is not in
they hear, they pray, ἡ ἡ ψυχὴ ἔξω, as *Ch*
sostome speaks, but their souls, their thoug
and minds are abroad. It is not their bu
ness to have fellowship with God in duties
get their lusts mortified, their hearts tryc
their souls conformed to the image of G
in holiness.

They pray as if they prayed not, and he
as if they heard not: and if they feel
power in Ordinances, no quickening in
ties, it is no disappointment at all to the
for these were not their designs in drawi
nigh to God in these appointments.

And thus you see what numbers of Prof
fessours deceive themselves.

SECT III.

AND if we seriously enquire into t
grounds and causes of this self dec
among professors, we shall find these *f*
thin

ings conspiring to delude and cheat them, the great concern of their salvation.

1. First, The natural deceitfulness of the eart, than which nothing is more treach-ous, and false, *Jer.* 17. 9. The heart is de-itful above all things, and desperately icked עקב הרב מכל *Supplanta-wum cor præ omnibus*, the heart is *Ar. Mont.* e greatest *supplanter*, the most crafty and btil cheat of all, it deceives us as *Jacob* id his brother, (to whose name this text ludes.) It defeats us of our heavenly heri-ge, as *Jacob* supplanted him in his earthly ne; while we are gone a hunting after arthly trifles. And wherein its deceitfulness rincipally appears, you may see by the so-mn *Caveat* of the *Apostle James*, 1.22. where-n he warns us to beware, that in hearing he word we deceive not our selves by false easonings; for so παραλογιζόμενοι imports, nd may be strictly rendred, *false reasoning hemselves*, namely by making false *syllogisms*; whereby they mis-conclude about their spiri-ual and eternal estate and condition, and be-ool themselves.

The time will come when a mans own eart will be found to have the chief hand n his ruine; and what *Apollodorus* did but ancy his heart said to him, some mens hearts ill tell them in earnest when they come to he place of misery and torment; ἐγὼ σοι

τῶν ἐμῶν. I have been the cause of all thi
I have betrayed thee into all these torment
It was my *lasiness*, my *credulity*, my aver
seness to the ways of strict godliness, morti
fication, and self denyal have for ever undon
thee. When thou satest under the convincin
truths of the Gospel; It was I that whispere
those Atheistical surmises into thine ear, per
swading thee all thou heardst was but th
intemperate heat of an hot brained zealot
when the Judgements of God were denoun
ced, and the misery thou now feelest fore
warned and threatned, it was I that whi
pered what the tongue of another onc
spake out, *Tunc credam, cùm illuc venero.* I wi
believe it when I come thither.

Surely this is a great truth which was ob
served by the wisest of men, *he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool*, Prov. 28. 26. an
thousands of such fools are to be found amon
Professours.

2. Secondly, *Satan* is a chief conspirato
in this treacherous design; *we are not ignoran* (saith the the Apostle) *of his devices*; νοήματα his Sophistry and sleights, 2 *Cor.* 2. 21, hi
δόλιαι, trains and methods of temptation
which are thoughly studied, and artificially
moulded and ordered; even such *Systems* a
Tutors and *Professours* of *Arts* and *Science*
have, and read over to their *Auditors*; a
one judiciously observes, to be the impor

o

of that Text, *Eph.* 6. 11. Nor it is to be wondred at, considering his vast knowledge, deep malice, and long experience in this Art of cheating; together with the great corruption and pronity of the hearts of men to close with his devices, and believe his impostures; that so vast a number of souls are take *captive by him at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. 26. Dr. *Goodwin* Child of Light

'Tis the God of this world that blinds the minds of them that believe not, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. *The God of this world*, (so call'd by *Mimesis*) who leads a *world* of poor deluded wretches to destruction, having first *blinded their minds*, that is deluded, and with his hellish art practised upon their understanding, that τὸ ἡγεμόνικον, leading and directive faculty, which is to the soul what eyes are to the body.

I remember *Basil* brings in *Satan* thus insulting *Christ*, I have them, I have them: for all thy blood and miracles, thy wooings and beseechings, thy knockings and strivings I have couzened thee of them at the very gates of Heaven: for all their illuminations, and tasting of the powers of the World to come; I have shipwrackt them in the very mouth of the haven.

3. Thirdly, The *common* works found in *unregenerate* souls, deceive many, who cannot distinguish them from the *special* work

of the *spirit* in Gods *Elect*: see that startling Scripture, *Heb.* 6. 4. where you find among the common operations of the Spirit upon *Apostates*, *illumination*, which gives perspicuity to their minds in discerning spiritual truths, and that frequently with more distinctness and depth of Judgment, than some gracious souls attain unto; besides, it is the matter out of which many rare and excellent gifts are formed in admirable variety; which are singularly useful to others as they are exercised in expounding the Scriptures, defending the truths of Christ by solid arguments, preaching, praying, &c. and make the subject of them renowned and honoured in the Church of God; whilest meantime they are dazled with their own splendour, and fatally ruined by them.

There you find also *Tasting* as well as enlightening. So that they seem to abound not only in *knowledge*, but in *sense* also, (*i. e.*) in some kind of *experience* of what they know; for experience is the bringing of things to the Test of spiritual sense. They do *taste* or experience the good that comes by the promises of the word, and discoveries of heaven and glory; though they feel not experimentally the transforming efficacy of these things upon their own souls.

Now that *illumination* furnishing them with excellent gifts (as before was noted)

enabling

enabling them to *Assent* to Gospel truths, which the Scripture calls faith, *Acts* 8. 12. and working in them *conviction* of sin, 1 *Sam.* 15. 24. reformation of life, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. and touching their affections also with transient joy in the discovery of those truths.

And this *Taste* which comes so near to the *experience* which the sanctified soul enjoyes: these things seem to put their condition beyond all controversie, and lay a foundation for their ill built confidence; nothing is more apt to beget and nourish such a Confidence than the meltings and workings of our affections about spiritual things; for as a *grave Divine* hath well observed, such a man seems to have all that is required of a Christian, and to have attained the very end of all knowledge, which is operation and influence upon the affections. When they shall find *heat* in their *affections* as well as *light* in their *minds*; how apt are they to say (as these self-deceivers in the *Text* did) they *are rich, and have need of nothing!* Now of all the false signs of grace by which men couzen themselves, none are so dangerous and destructive to souls, as those that come neareſt true ones: never doth *Satan* more effectually and securely manage his chears, than when he is transformed into an *Angel of light*. *Mr. A. Burgess.*

Among

Among this sort of self-deceivers, how many gifted men, and among that sort some employed in the office of the Ministry, will be found! whose daily imployment being about spiritual things, studying, preaching, praying, &c. conclude themselves sanctified persons, because they are versant about sacred imployments, as if the *subject* must be, because the *object* is sacred. Oh that such would seriously ponder those two Scriptures Mat. 7. 22. *Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils and in thy name done many wonderful things?* and 1 Cor. 9. 27. —— *lest that by any means when I have preached unto others, I my self should be a cast away.*

4. Lastly, To add here no more, this strengthens self-deceit exceedingly in many, *viz.* their observations of and comparing themselves with others. Thus the *Pharisees*, (those grosse self-deceivers) *trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others*, Luke 18. 9. their low rating of others, gave them that high rate and value of themselves: and thus the proverb is made good, *regnat luscus inter cæcos*, he that hath but one eye, is a King among the blind.

Thus the false *Apostles* cheated and befool'd themselves, 2 Cor. 10. 12. *but they measuring themselves by themselves, and com-*

pari-

measuring themselves among themselves, are not wise.
God hath not made one Man a measure or
standard to another Man, but his Word is
the common beam or scale to try all Men.
These Men are as sharp sighted to note o-
ther Mens evils, as their own excellencies,
to eye the miscarriages of others with *deri-*
sion, and their own performances with *admira-*
tion.

They bless themselves when they behold
the prophane in their impieties, *Luk.* 18. 11.
God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are,
extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, or even as this
publican, q. d. O what a Saint am I in com-
parison of these *miscreants*! The *Pharisees*
religion you see runs all upon *nots*; a *nega-*
tive holiness is enough to him; and the mea-
sure he takes of it is by comparison of him-
self, with others more externally vile than
himself. A Christian may say with praise
and humility, *I am not as some men are*, but
though *he know nothing by himself, yet is he*
not thereby justified, 1 Cor. 4. 4. he neither
takes together the enormities of the vilest, or
the infirmities of the holiest to justifie and
applaud himself as these Self-deceivers do.
And these are the causes and occasions of that
general deception, under which so great a
part of the professing World bow down,
and perish.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

3. IN the last place I shall prove this poi
variously according to the importan
and usefulness of it, with as much brevi
and closeness of Application as I can: A
Use. 1. Shall be for *Caution* to Professor
before I tell you what use you should ma
of it, I must tell you what use you may n
make of it.

First, Don't make this use of it, to co
clude from what hath been said, that all *P*
fessors are but a pack of *Hypocrites*, and th
there is no Truth nor Integrity in any Ma
this is both intolerable *arrogance* to ascen
the *Throne* of God, and unparallel'd *Uncha*
ritableness to judge the *hearts* of all Men.

Some Men are as apt to conclude others
be Hypocrites, by measuring their hearts b
their own, as others are to conclude them
selves *Saints*, by comparing their own *exce*
lencies with other Mens *corruptions*; but ble
sed be God there is some grain among th
heap of chaff, some true *Diamonds* amon
the counterfeit Stones. The *Devil* hath n
the whole piece; a remnant according t
election belongs really to the Lord.

2. *Secondly*, Don't make this use of it, tha
assurance must needs be impossible, becau
so many Professors are found to be Self de
ceivers.

Tha

That assurance is one of the great difficulties in Religion, is a great truth; but that is therefore unattainable in this World, is very false. *Popish Doctrine* indeed makes it impossible, but that Doctrine is practically confuted in the comfortable experience of many Souls: all are commanded to strive for it: 2 Pet. 1. 10. *give diligence to make your calling and Election sure*: and some have the happiness to obtain it: 2 Tim. 1. 12. *for I know whom I have believed, and I am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*

Let the *Similar* works upon *Hypocrites* resemble as much as they will the *saving* works of the Spirit upon Believers; yet God doth wayes, and the Saints do *sometimes* plainly discern the difference.

3. *Thirdly*, Don't make this use of it, to conceal and hide the Truths or Graces of God, or refuse to *profess*, and *confess* them before Men, because many Professors deceive themselves and others also; by a vain Profession, because another professeth what he hath not, must you therefore hide or deny what you have? 'Tis true, the *possession* of Grace and Truth in your own Souls is that which saves you; but the *profession* and *confession* of it, is that which honours God, and edifies; yea, sometimes is the instrument to save others: It's your comfort that you feel it,

it, it's others comfort to know that you so. *Ostentation* is your sin, but a serious humble *profession* is your duty, *Rom.* 10.

SECT. V.

Use. 2. HAving shewed you in the for *Section* what *use* you ought *n* make of this Doctrine, I will next shew what *use* you *ought* to make of it; and su you cannot improve this point to a be purpose than from it to take warni and look to your selves, that you be of that number who deceive themselves their *Profession*. If this be so, suffer me clo to press that great *Apostolical Caution*, 1 C 10. 12. *Let him that thinks he stands, take h lest he fall.* O Professors, look carefully your foundation; be not high minded, fear: you have it may be done and suffe many things in and for Religion; you h excellent gifts, and sweet comforts, a wa zeal for God, and high confidence of y integrity; all this may be *right* (for ou I or (it may be) you know) but yet 'tis p sible it may be *false* also; you have so times judged your selves, and pronoun your selves upright; but remember your *nal Sentence* is not yet pronounced by yo Judge. And what if God weigh you over gain in his more equal ballance, & should *Mene tekel*, thou art weighed in the ballan

d art found wanting; What a confounded
an wilt thou be under such a Sentance!
æ splendent in conspectu hominis, sordent in
spectu Judicis; things that are highly e-
emed of Men, are an abomination in the
ht of God; he seeth not as Man seeth.
Thy Heart may be false, and thou not
ow it; yea, it may be false, and thou
ongly confident of its Integrity.
The Saints may approve thee, and God
ndemn thee, Rev. 3. 1. *Thou hast a name*
t thou livest but thou art dead: Men may
there's a true *Nathanael*, and God may
there's a self-cozening *Pharisee*.
Reader, thou hast heard of *Judas* & *Demas*,
Ananias & *Sapphira*, of *Hymenæus* and *Phile-*
; once renowned and famous Professors,
thou hast heard what they proved at last.
Take heed their case be not thine own;
they not all as it were with one mouth
to thee, O Professor! if thou wilt not
me where we are, don't cozen thy self
we did: if thou expectest a better place
d *lot*, be sure thou get a sincerer *Heart*:
d we been more *self-suspicious*, we had
en more *safe*.
I would not scare you with *needless jealou-*
, but I would fain prevent *fatal mistakes*.
on't you find your hearts deceitful in ma-
things? Don't they shuffle over secret
uties? Don't they *censure* the same evils in
others,

others, which they ſcarce *reprove* in yo
ſelves? Are there not many by ends in d
ties? Don't you find they are far leſs affect
with a great deal of ſervice and honour do
to God by others, than with a little by yo
ſelves?

Is it not hard to look upon other Me
excellencies without *envy*, or upon your ow
without *pride*?

And are you not troubled with a *baſe I*
vil, as well as with a bad Heart? Hath n
he that circuits the whole World obſerv
you? Hath he not ſtudied your conſtitu
on ſins, and found out that ſin which m
eaſily beſets you? Hath he leſs malice
gainſt your Souls than others? Surely y
are in the very thick of temptations; tho
ſands of ſnares are round about you. Oh ho
difficultly are the Righteous ſaved! How ha
to be upright! How few even of the profe
ſing World win Heaven at laſt!

O therefore ſearch your hearts, Profeſſo
and let this caution go down to your ve
reins; *let him that thinks he ſtands, take he
leſt he fall.*

Away with raſh uncharitable cenſures
others, and be more juſt and ſevere in cen
ring your ſelves. Away with dry and unpr
fitable controverſies, & ſpend your thoug
upon this great queſtion, Am I ſound, or a
I rotten at heart? am I a new Creature,

y… old Creature still in a new Creatures dress
n … d habit? Beg the Lord that you be not
…ceived in that great point (your inte-
do…rity) whatever else you may be mistaken
yo…. Pray that you be not given up to an
…edless, careless, and vain Spirit, and then
Me…ave Religious duties for a *Rattle* to still and
ou…iet your Consciences.

Surely, that ground-work can never be
…id too sure, upon which so great a stress as
…y soul and eternity must depend. It will
…ot repent thee (I dare promise) when thou
…omest to die, that thou hast employed thy
…me and strength to this end: whilest o-
…hers are panting after the dust of the Earth,
…nd saying, who will shew us any good? be
…ou panting after the assurances of the love
…f God, and crying who will shew me how
…o make my calling and election sure?

O deceive not your selves with names & …otions! think not, because you are for a …ricter way of Worship, or because you as…ociate with (and are accordingly denomi…ated) one of the more reformed Professors; …hat therefore you are safe enough: alas! how …mall an interest have titles, modes, and de…ominations in Religion? Suppose a curious …tist take a lump of Lead and refine it, and …ast it into the Mould; whence it comes …orth shining, and bearing some noble figure, …uppose of an *Eagle*, yet it is but a leaden *Ea-*

gle.

gle. Suppose the Figure of a *Man*, and that the most exact lineaments and proportion yet still is it but a *leaden Man.* Nay, let bear the Figure of an *Angel*, it is but a *lead Angel:* for the base and ignoble matter the same it was, though the Figure be n Even so, Take an Unregenerate carnal Ma let his life be reformed, and his tongue r fined; and call him a zealous *Conformist*, a strict *Non-conformist*; call him a *Presbyte an*, an *Independant* or what you will; he all the while but a carnal Conformist, Non-conformist; an unregenerate Presbyt rian, a carnal Independent; for the *nature* still the same, though the stamp and figu his Profession gives him, be not the same.

O my Friends believe it, fine names, a brave words, are of little value with Go God will no more spare you for these, th *Samuel* did *Agag* for his delicate Ornamen and spruce appearance: either make su the root of the matter, or the *leaves* of a va Profession will not long cover you.

To be deceived by another is bad enoug but to deceive our selves is a thousand tim worse.

To deceive our selves in truths of the *S superstructure* is bad, and they that do so sh suffer loss; 1 *Cor.* 3. 12. but to deceive o selves in the *foundation* is a desperate dece and shipwracks all our hope and happine at once.

If any Man lose his *Money* by a *cheat* it *troubles him*, but to lose his Soul by a *cheat* will *confound him*: if a Man lose an Eye, an Ear, a Hand, a Foot; yet *omnia Deus dedit duplicia*, as *Chrysostome* speaks; God hath given these Members double; so that there's another left; *animam verò unam*; but the Soul is one, and only one, and if that be damned, you have not another to be saved.

O therefore be restless till it be, and till you know it be out of eternal danger.

SECT. VI.

Use 3. IN conclusion, if so many Professors of Religion be cheated in their Profession, let all that are well satisfied and assured of their integrity bless the Lord whilst they live, for that mercy. O 'tis a mercy that no unsanctified Soul can have; yea, & it's a mercy that many gracious Souls cannot obtain, though they seek it with tears; and would part with all the pleasant things they have in the World to enjoy it.

This is that mercy that gives Souls the highest pleasures this World is acquainted with, or the state of this mortality can bear: for let the well assured Soul but consider what it is assured of: *Christ* with the purchase of his Blood. O what is this! *I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine*, Cant. 2. 16. what a vital ravishing overpowering efficacy is in

that

that voice of Faith. Let it but look back few Years, and compare what it was wi what it is: it was afar off, it's now ma nigh, *Ephes.* 2. 12, 13. It was not belove but is now beloved, *Rom.* 25. 26. it had n obtained mercy, but now hath obtain mercy, 1 *Pet.* 2. 10. or let the assured So look forward and compare what it now and hath, with what it shortly shall be mad and put in possession of: *Beloved,* (saith t Apostle) *now are we the Sons of God, but doth not yet appear what we shall be: but w know that when he shall appear, we shall be li him, for we shall see him as he is,* 1 John. 3.

I say, let the assured Soul but steep i thoughts by meditation in these subjects, an it is as impossible to keep him from h transports of Joy, as it is for a Man to for bear laughing when he is tickled.

O what a life have you in comparison o other Men? Some have two Hells, one pr sent, another coming; you have two Hea vens; one in hand, the other in hope. Som of your own brethren in Christ, that hav been it may be many years panting after a surance, are still denyed it; but God hat indulged so peculiar a favour to you. Ble ye the Lord, and make his praise glorious.

CHAP

CHAP. III.

Containing the Proof and Improvement of

Doct. 2 *That true Grace is exceeding precious, and greatly enricheth the Soul that hath it; it's Christs Gold.*

SECT. I. THE *Lord Jesus* here chooseth the most pure, precious, resplendent, durable, and valuable thing, in the Treasuries, and magazines of Nature, to shadow forth saving Grace, which is infinitely more excellent; certainly that must be the best thing, which the best things in Nature can but imperfectly shadow forth. What was the golden Oyl emptied through the two golden pipes, *Zech.* 4. but the precious Graces of God, flowing through Christ, into all his Members? Gold precious, but one *drachm* of saving grace more precious than all the Gold of *Ophir*. *Cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof*, Job 28. 15. Only *Gold* and *Silver*, *Saphires*, *Diamonds* and *Rubies* are not worth the mentioning, when saving Grace is once mentioned. For consider it,

1. First, In its *cause*, and *fountain* from whence it flows; and you shall find it to be the fruit of the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 22. who upon this accompt is called *the Spirit of Grace*, *Heb.* 10.

10. 29. It derives its original from the m
high; it is Spirit born of Spirit, *Joh.* 3. 6
the *rules of Morality*, all humane dilige
and industry can never produce one gr
ous habit or act alone, 2 Cor. 3. 5. *Not*
we are sufficient of our selves, &c.

Nay, we speak not becoming the inco
parable worth of grace, when we say, it is
fruit and birth of the Spirit; for so are c
mon gifts also. There are several emanati
from this Sun, divers streams from this fo
tain; but of all his operations and prod
ons, this of saving grace is the most noble
excellent. *Gifts* are from the Spirit as we
grace, but grace is more excellent than
best gifts, 1 *Cor.* 12. 31. *covet earnestly the*
gifts, and yet shew I unto you a more exce
way. Hence you read in *Phil.* 1. 10. *of th*
that are excellent, or as the original, τὰ δ
διαφέροντα might be rendred, *things that d*
Namely, in respect of excellency; no
good and evil, but as less good, and m
good differ. Gifts have their value and
ciousness, but the best gifts differ as m
from grace, as brass from *gold*; though
be generated by the influence of same
Gifts (as one saith) are *dead graces*, but
ces are *living gifts*: it is the most exce
production of the highest and most e
lent cause.

2. *Secondly*, Consider it in its *nature*,

ou will find it *Divine*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. *partakers the Divine Nature, viz.* in our *Sanctification*: not that it gives us the *Properties* of the ivine nature, they are incommunicable; t the similitude, and resemblance of it is mped upon our souls, in the work of grace. *The new man is renewed in knowledge, after e image of him that created him*, Col. 3. 10. he *Schoolmen* and some of the *Fathers* place is image or resemblance of God, in the atural faculties of the soul, *viz.* the underanding, memory and will; which is an *mbrace* of a *Trinity in Unity*: but it rather onsists in the *renovation of the Faculties* by race; for in this we bear the Divine Image pon our Souls, and that Image or Resemlance of God in Holiness, is the *beauty* nd *honour* of our Souls.

It is their beauty, *How fair, and how pleaant art thou O love for delights!* saith *Christ* of is People, *Cant.* 7. 6. Natural beauty conists in the *Symmetry*, and comely proportion f parts each with other; Spiritual beauty n the harmony or agreeableness of our souls o *God*: and as it is our chiefest beauty, so ertainly it is our highest *honour*; for it gives s access unto *God*, who is the Fountain of *honour* and *Glory*; and this makes the righteous *more excellent than his neighbour*; let his neighbour be what he will, tho' the blood of *Nobles* run in his Veins, the righteous is

more excellent than he; except saving grac
be also diffused into his soul.

3. *Thirdly*, Consider it in its *recipient su*
ject, & you will find its value still to increas
for the *precious* oyl of Saving Grace is neve
poured into any other than an *elect vessel*.

Hence faith, one branch of sanctificatio
is with respect to its *subject*, stiled *the Faith*
Gods Elect, Tit. 1. 1. Whosoever finds tr
grace in his Soul, may (during the evidenc
thereof) from it strongly conclude his *E*
lection, looking backward, and his *Salvati*
looking forward, *Rom.* 8. 30. it *marks* an
seals the Person in whom it is for glory. *Ge*
hath set apart him that is godly for himself. Ps. 4.

4. *Fourthly*, View the precious worth o
grace in its *excellent effects* and influences up
on the soul, in which it inheres.

(1.) It *adorns* it with incomparable Orn
ments, which are of great price in the sigh
of God, 1 *Pet.* 3. 4. yea it reflects such beam
of Glory in the soul where its seat is, Th
Christ himself the *Author*, is also the *Admir*
of it, *Cant.* 4. 9. *Thou hast ravished my heart, m*
sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart wit
one of thine eyes, with one of the chains of th
neck. And as one overcome with its excellin
beauty, he saith, *Turn away thine eyes fro*
me, for they have overcome me, Cant. 6. 5.

(2.) It *Elevates* and *ennobles* a Mans Spir
beyond all other principles in Man. It se
th

heart and affections upon Heaven, and
es them up with the glory of the inviſible
rld, *Phil.* 3. 20. *But our converſation is in*
ven, from whence we look for a Saviour.
hil'ſt others are trading for Corn, & Wine;
Sheep and Oxen; for Feathers & Trifles;
gracious Soul is trading with God for par-
and peace; for Righteouſneſs and Life;
Glory and Immortality. *Truly our fellow-*
is with the Father, and with his Son Chriſt
us, 1 John 1. 3.

3.) It doth not only raiſe the Spirit by
verſing with God, and things above; but
nſforms the ſoul, by that converſe, into
likeneſs of thoſe heavenly Objects it con-
ſeth with. *It changeth them into the ſame*
ge, 2 Cor. 3. 18. ſo that though the ſan-
ied Man ſtill remains, the *who he was*,
not the *what he was* before, the very
per of his ſpirit is altered.

4.) It doth not only *transform* the ſoul in
ich it is, but *preſerves* the *ſubject* in which
: it is a ſingular *preſervative* from ſin;
hat though ſin *be* in them ſtill, and *works*
hem ſtill; yet it cannot *prevail* in them
, to fulfil the luſts of it, as it was want to
Gal. 5. 17. Sin conceives, but cannot
g forth fruit unto death; this gives it a
carrying womb.

5.) It doth not only preſerve it from *ſin*,
Grace eſtabliſheth the ſoul in whom it is,

far beyond any other *Arguments* without; or any other *principles* within a Man. *It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace,* Heb. 13. 9. This is that which the *Apostle* calls our own *stedfastness*; or that ballast we have within our selves; which keeps us fixt and stable. O the excellencies of Grace!

(6) To conclude, it is the root of all that precious fruit which we bring forth to God in this World. It is the root of every gracious *word* in our *lips*, and of every gracious *work* in our *hands*: be the matter of our gracious thoughts never so excellent, the matter of our heavenly discourses and prayers never so sweet; still grace is the root of the matter; *Job* 19. 28. O then what a precious thing is grace!

5. *Fifthly*, View it in its *properties*, and you will soon discover its transcendent excellencies: the richest *Epithets* are no *Hyperbola* here, we speak not beyond the value of it, when we call it *Supernatural Grace*, for so it is. It comes down from above, from the Father of Lights, *Jam.* 1. 17. nature can never be improved to that height, how much soever its Admirers boast of it: nor do we strain too high, when we call it *immortal grace*; for so God hath made it: this is that water which springs up in the sanctified soul into eternal *life*, *John* 4. 14. It will not dye when thou dieſt, but ascend with the soul from

from which it is inseparable; and be swallowed up with it into glory, *Rom.* 8. 10. you may out-live your *friends*, you may outlive your *Estates*, you may out-live your *Gifts*; but you can't out-live your *Graces*.

Shall I say it is the most *sweet and comfortable thing* that ever the soul was acquainted with in this World, next *Jesus Christ*, the *Author* and Fountain of it? Sure if I so speak, I have as many witnesses to attest it, as there be gracious souls in the World: nothing is more comfortable than grace, except *Christ*, and yet without grace no soul can feel the comforts of Christ, in the *troubles of life*, or in the *straits* of death: this is a spring of comfort.

6. *Sixthly*, Consider it in its *design* & *scope*; and you will still discern more and more of its precious excellency: for what is the aim and end of God in the infusions and improvements of Grace, but to attemper and mould our Spirits by it, into a meetness and fitness for the enjoyment of himself in the world to come? *Col.* 1. 12. *giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light*: compare this with 2 *Cor.* 5. 5. *now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God*.

O blessed design! how precious must that work be, which is wrought for so high and glorious a purpose as this is! no work more excellent, no end more noble. C 2. 7.

7. *Seventhly*, Consider the *means* and *instruments* both *principal*, and *subordinate*, employed in this work: many blessed instruments are set on work to beget, conserve and improve it in our souls: and these speak the precious worth of it: no wise man will dig for a base and worthless metal, with golden mattocks. The *blood* of Christ was shed to procure it, *Heb.* 13. 12.

The *Spirit of God* is sent forth to form and create it; for it is his own workmanship, *Ephes.* 2. 10. his fruit, *Gal.* 5. 22.

The *Ordinances* and *Officers* of the Gospel were at first instituted, and ever since continued in the Church, for this works sake, *John* 17. 17. and *Eph.* 4. 12. it's the fruit of Christs blood; yea, and it hath cost the sweat and blood of the dispensers of the Gospel too.

Nay, all the *works of Providence* look this way; and aim at this thing, *Rom.* 8. 28. What is the errand of all Gods rods, but to make us partakers of his holiness? *Heb.* 12. 10.

8. *Eighthly*, The high value that the most high God sets upon grace, shews it to be an excellent thing indeed: *it is of great price in his sight*, 1 Pet. 3. 4. no service finds acceptation with God, but what is performed by grace: none but sanctified vessels, are meet for the Masters use. *The end of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure heart*, 1 Tim. 1. 5.

The

The weakeſt performances of grace find acceptance with him, though clog'd with many ſinful weakneſſes and infirmities, *Heb.* 11. 31, 32. if God ſo prize it, well may we: he that made the *Jewel*, beſt underſtands the value of it.

9. *Ninthly*, *The Hypocritical pretences* made to it all over the profeſſing world, ſhew what a moſt precious and deſirable thing it is: if there were not ſome ſingular glory in it, why doth every one covet to be reputed gracious? nay the *Devil* himſelf baits many of his hooks of temptation with a ſhew of grace: for he knows ſin hath no native beauty of its own to entice; and therefore he borrows the paint and pretence of holineſs, to cover it: but O what a *dilemma* will the *Hypocrite* be poſed with at laſt? and how can he anſwer it when God ſhall demand.

If grace were evil, why didſt thou ſo affect the name and reputation of it? And if it were good, why didſt thou ſatisfie thy ſelf with the empty name and ſhadow of it only?

10. *Tenthly*, To conclude; The *incomparable eſteem* that all good men have for it, ſhews it to be a thing of ineſtimable price.

Grace is the *ſum* of all their *prayers*, the *ſcope* of all their *endeavours*, the *matter* of their chief *Joy*, the reward of their afflictions and ſufferings. Their chief *Joys* and ſorrows, hopes and fears in this World, are taken up

about it: by all which it appears that its price is above *Rubies*; and all the Gold and Silver in the World are but dung and dross in comparison with it.

SECT. II.

Containing six practical inferences from this Precious Truth.

Infer. 1. Is saving grace more precious than Gold? *Let them that have it bless God for it, & not boast*: Mens hearts are as apt to puff up and swell with *spiritual*, as with *material* gold: it's hard to be an owner of much of this *gold*, and not be lifted up with it. To keep down thy heart, and preserve thine eyes from being dazled with these their gracious excellencies; it will be needful for thee Christian sometime to consider,

That altho' Grace be one of the most excellent things that ever God created, yet it is *but a Creature*, a dependent thing, 1 *Cor.* 5. 17. Yea, it is not only a Creature, but a very imperfect creature yet in thy soul; labouring under many weaknesses, *Phil.* 3. 12. and sometimes ready to die, *Rev.* 3. 2.

Though it can do many things for you, yet it cannot Justifie you before God: you cannot make a garment of to cover your guilt, not plead the dignity of it at Gods bar for your discharge; 'tis not your *inherent*, but Christs *imputed righteousness* must do that for you; though in other respects it be very necessary. Nay,

Nay, remember; how excellent soever it be, it's not the native growth and product of your hearts; all the grace you have is foraign to your Natures; and what you have, is received, 1 *Cor.* 4. 7.

And Lastly, remember he that is most proud and conceited of his own graces, will be found to be the owner of least grace, and hath most cause to question, whether he have any or no. It's the nature of grace to humble, abase and empty the Soul; and it's the strength of our Corruptions which thus puffs us up with vain conceits.

Infer. 2. Is Saving Grace more excellent than gold? *what cause then have the poorest Christians to be well satisfied with their lot?* To others God hath given *Ishmael*'s portion the fatness of the *Earth*; to you *Isaac*'s, the grace of the Covenant: their portion is paid in *brass*, yours in *gold*: many of you are *poor in the World*, but *rich in faith*; *and heirs of the Kingdom which God hath promised*, Jam. 2. 5. what is the *dust* of the *Earth*, to the *fruits* of the *Spirit*? you are troubled that you have no more of the World; it may be if you had more *gold*, you would have less *grace*: you consider not how many are poor & wretched in both worlds; *moneyless*, and *Christless* too: you don't consider you are near come to that state, in which all your wants will be fully supply'd where you shall not need the treasures of the

Earth

Earth, and have your desires satisfied out of the treasures of grace and glory.

Infer. 3. Is Saving Grace *Gold*, yea infinitely more precious than Gold? *then surely declining Christians are great losers, and have cause to be great mourners.* The remission of the least degree of *Grace*, is more to be lamented than the loss of the greatest sum of *Gold*.

Though the habits of Grace be not lost; yet the *Acts* of Grace may be suspended, 2 *Sam.* 12. 31. The *degrees* of grace may be *remitted*, *Rev.* 3. 3. The *evidences* of grace may be *clouded*, and *consequently* the *Comforts* of grace may *be suspended*, Ha. 50. 10. and the least of these is such a loss, as all the treasures of the Earth cannot repair: well therefore may declined Christians challenge the first place among all the mourners in the world.

Infer. 4. Is grace so invaluably precious? *How precious then ought the ordinances of God to be to our souls, by which grace is first communicated, and afterwards improved in our souls! The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver*, Psal. 119. 72. and good reason, whilest it *imparts* and *improves* that to which Gold and Silver is but dross and dung.

None but those that value not Grace, will ever slight the *means*, or despise and injure the *instruments* thereof. It's a sad sign of a graceless world, when these precious things fall under contempts and slights.

Infer. 5.

Infer. 5. If Grace be so precious, *how watchful should all gracious persons be in the dates of temptation!* the design of temptation is to rob you of your treasure: when *Cut-purses* get into the croud, we use to say; Friends, look to your purses. How many brave Christians have we read and heard of, that have rather chosen to part with their *lives*, than with their *graces*, who have *resisted unto blood, striving against sin?* Heb. 12. 4.

O Christians, you live in a cheating Age, many *seeming* Christians have lost *all*, and many *real* Christians have lost *much*, so much, that they are like to see but little comfort in this World: who are like to go mourning to the Grave with that Lamentation. *Job* 29. 2, 3. *O that it were with me as in times past!*

Infer. 6. To Conclude. Is there such precious worth in saving Grace? *then bless God for, and diligently use all means to increase and improve it in your souls.* It's Gold for preciousness, and for usefulness; and must not be laid up in a Napkin: that's a sin condemned by the very scope of that *Parable*, Mat. 25. 14, 15, *&c.*

All Christians indeed have not the same advantages of improvement, but all must improve it according to the advantages they have in order to an account. *Reserved Christians* who live too abstracted from the Society and Communion of others, and disperse not their streams abroad to the benefit of others

no

nor improve the graces of others for their own benefit, are wanting both to their own duty and comfort. See you a Man rich in *grace*; O trade with him if you can, to improve your selves by him; and the rather, because you know not how soon death may snatch him from you, and with him all his stock of Grace is gone from you too, except what you made your own whilst you conversed with him: but alas, alas! instead of *holy* profitable soul-improving communion, some are sullenly reserved; some are negligent and lazy; some are litigious and wrangling; more apt to draw forth the dross, than the Gold; I mean the Corruptions, than Graces of others. And how few there be that drive a profitable trade for increase of grace, is sad to consider.

And as grace is not improved by communion with *men*, so I doubt most Christians thrive but little in their communion with *God*: we are too seldom in our *Closets*, too little upon our *knees*, and when we are there, we gain but little, we come not off such gainers by duty as we might. O Christians, think when you are hearing, and praying, I am now trading with Heaven for that which is infinitely better than Gold. God is rich to all that call upon him, what a treasure may I get this hour, if the fault be not in my one heart? And thus of the second observation.

CHAP

CHAP. IV.

Wherein the third Doctrine, being the main subject of this Treatise is opened, and the method of the whole discourse stated.

Doct. 3. *That only is to be accounted true grace which is able to endure all those tryals appointed or permitted for the discovery of it.*

SECT. I. THE most wise God hath seen it fit to set all his people in a state of tryal in this world. First, he *tryes*, and then he *Crowns* them. Jam. 1. 12. *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation,* ὑπομένει πειρασμὸν, (i.e.) probation or tryal] *for when he is tryed, he shall receive the crown of life,* &c.

No man can say what he is, whether his graces be true or false, till they be tryed and examined by those things which are to them as fire is to gold. These self-deceivers in the *Text*, thought they had grace; yea they thought they had been rich in grace, but it proved no better than *dross*: and therefore *Christ* here counsels them to *buy of him gold tryed in the fire,* (i. e.) true grace indeed, which appears to be so upon the various proofs and examinations of its sincerity which are to be made in this world, as well as in the great solemn tryal it must come to in the world to come.

The Scriptures speak of a twofold tryal, *viz.*

Opinion

A tryal of mens { Opinions and Graces.

1. *First*, The *opinions* and Judgments of men are tryed as by fire, in which sense we are to understand that place, 1 *Cor.* 3. 12, 13. *Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones; wood, hay, stubble every mans work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every mans work of what sort it is.*

This *text* speaks of such persons as hold the foundation of Christianity, but yet superstructed such doctrines and practices, as were no more able to endure the Tryal, than *hay*, *wood*, or *stubble* can endure the fire. Such a person hereby brings himself into danger, and though the *Apostle* will not deny the *possibility*, yet he asserts the *difficulty* of his salvation: *he shall be saved, yet so as by fire*, (*i. e.*) as a man is saved by leaping out of his house at midnight when it is all on fire about his ears: for so that phrase imports, *Amos* 4. 11. and *Jude* 23. glad to escape naked, and with the loss of his goods, blessing God, he hath his life for a prey: as little regard shall such have to their erroneous

Dum probantur toti in fumum abeunt.

Quo ex judicio velut ex incendio nuddus effugit. Chrysost.

erroneous notions, and unscriptural opinions at last.

2. *Secondly*, The *graces* of men are brought to the test as well as their opinions. Tryal will be made of their *hearts*, as well as of their *heads*; and upon this tryal the everlasting safety & happiness of the person depends: if a mans opinions be some of them found hay or stubble, yet so long as he holds the head, & is right in the foundation, he may be saved; but if a mans supposed graces be found so, all the world cannot save him; there is no way of escape if he finally deceive himself herein: and of this tryal of *Graces* my text speaks: Sincere Grace is Gold tryed by fire.

There is a twofold tryal of grace, Active, and Passive.

First, an *Active* tryal of it, in which we try it our selves, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. *Examine your selves, prove your selves*: (i e.) measure your *hearts, duties* and *graces* by the rule of the word; see how they answer to that rule, bring your hearts and the word together by solemn self-examination: confer with your reins, and commune with your own hearts.

Secondly, A *Passive* tryal of it: whether we try it or no, God will try it, he will bring our gold to the touchstone, and to the fire. *Thou O Lord knowest me, thou hast seen me and tryed mine heart towards thee*, saith the Prophet, *Jer.* 12. 3.

Sometimes

Sometimes he tryes the *strength* and *a*
lity of his servants graces, and thus he try
Abraham, *Heb.* 11. 17. and sometimes
tryes the *soundness* and *sincerity* of our grac
so the *Ephesian Angel* was tryed, and foun
dross, *Rev.* 2. 2. And so *Job* was tryed a
found true gold, *Job* 23. 10. These tryals a
not made by God for his own informatio
for he knows what is in man, his eyes pie
his heart and reins; but for our informatio
which is the true sense of *Deut.* 8. 2. *Th*
shalt remember all the way which the Lord
God led thee these forty years in the wilderne
humble thee, and to prove thee, to know w
was in thy heart, (i. e.) to make thee kno
it, by giving thee such experiments and tr
als of it in those wilderness straits and d
ficulties.

And these are the tryals of grace I a
here to speak of, not excluding the *Active tr*
als made by our selves; no, no, all these tr
als made by God upon us are designed
put us upon the tryal of our selves: whe
God tryes, we should try too.

Now the method into which I shall c
this discourse, shall be to shew you,

1. *First*, What those things are which t
the sincerity of our graces, as fire tryes gol

2. *Secondly*, For what ends doth God p
the graces of his people upon such tryals
this world.

Third

3. *Thirdly*, That such grace only is sincere as can endure these tryals.

4. *Fourthly* and *Lastly*, To apply the whole, the main uses of it.

SECT. II.

First, *WHAT those things are which try the sincerity of grace, as fire tryes gold.*

Before I enter into particulars, it will be needful to acquaint you that the subject before me is full of difficulties. There is need (as one speaks) of much cautious respect to the various sizes and degrees of growth among Christians, and the vicissitudes of their inward case: else we may darken and perplex the way instead of clearing it.

The *constructure* of a Christian is such as none can draw to one *Model*, but with respect to the *infancy* of some, as well as the age and *strength* of others.

Great heed also ought to be had in the application of *marks* and *signs*, we should first try them, before we try *our selves*, or *others* by them. *Marks* and *signs* are by some distinguished into *exclusive*, *inclusive*, and *positive*: *exclusive marks* serve to shut out bold pretenders, by shewing them how far they come short of a saving work of grace, and they are commonly taken from some necessary common duty, as hearing, praying, &c. he that doth

doth not these things, cannot have any wo
of Grace in him; and yet if he do them,
cannot from thence conclude his estate to
gracious: he that so concludes deceiv
himself.

Inclusive Marks rather discover the *degre*
than the truth of grace, and are rather
tended for *comfort*, than for *conviction*:
we find them in our selves, we do not on
find *sincerity*, but *eminency* of grace:
being taken from some raised degree and
minent acts of grace in confirmed a
grown Christians.

Betwixt the two former there is a midd
sort of *marks*, which are called *positive mar*
and they are such as are alwayes and on
found in regenerate souls. The *Hypocrite* ha
them not, *the grown Christian* hath them, an
that in an eminent degree, the *poorest Christi*
hath them in a lower but saving degre
great care must be taken in the applicatio
of them: and it's past doubt that many we
and injudicious Christians have been great
prejudiced by finding the experiences of em
nent Christians proposed as rules to measu
their sincerity by. Alas! these no more
their *souls*, than *Sauls* Armour did *David's bo*

These things being premised, and a d
care carried along with us through this d
course; I shall next come to the particula
and shew you what those things are whi
discov

discover the state and tempers of our souls. And though it be true, that there is no condition we are in, no providence that befals us, but it takes some proof, and makes some discovery of our hearts: yet to limit this discourse, and fall into particulars as soon as we can, I shall shew what *Tryals* are made of our graces in this world, by our *prosperity*, and our *adversity*, by our *corruptions*, and our *duties*: and lastly by our *sufferings* upon the score and account of Religion.

SECT. III.

First, *Prosperity*, Success, and the increase of outward enjoyments, are to grace what fire is to gold. Riches and Honours make tryal what we are, and by these things many a false heart hath been detected, as well as the sincerity & eminency of others graces discovered: we may fancy the fire of prosperity to be rather for *comfort* than *tryal*; to *refresh* us rather than to *prove* us; but you will find prosperity to be a great *discovery*; and that scarce any thing proves the truth and strength of mens graces and corruptions more than it doth: *Rara virtus est humilitas honorata*, saith *Bernard*, to find humility with honour is to find a *Phœnix*; let an obscure person be lifted up to honour, and how steady and well-composed soever he was before, it's a thousand to one but his eyes will dazle

and

Magistratus indicat virum.

and his head run round when he is upon the lofty pinacle of praise and honour: Prov. 27. 21. *As the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so is a man to his praise.* put the best gold into the *fining pot* of praise, and it's a great wonder if a great deal of dross do not appear. *Isa.* 39. 2. the vain glory of good *Hezekiah* rose like a *froth* or scum upon the *pot*, when heated by prosperity. It was such a fining pot to *Herod* as discovered him to be dross its self, *Acts* 12. 23. How did that poor worm swell under that tryal into the conceit of a God? and was justly destroyed by *worms*, because he forgat himself to be one: we little think what a strange alteration an exalted estate will make upon our spirits. When the *Prophet* would abate the vain confidence of *Hazael* who could not believe that ever he should be turned into such a salvage beast as the *Prophet* had foretold: he only tells him, *The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be King over* Syria, 2 *King.* 8. 13. The meaning is, don't be too confident *Hazael*, that thy temper and disposition can never alter to that degree, Thou never yet satest in a *Throne*; when men see the *Crown* upon thy *head*, then they will better see the true temper of thy *heart*.

How humble was *Israel* in the Wilderness, tame and tractable in a lean pasture

t bring them once into *Canaan*, and the orld is strangely altered; then, *we are Lords*, y they, *we will come no more unto thee*, Jer. 2, 7, 31. Prosperity is a *Crisis* both to ace and corruption. Thence is that caution o *Israel*, Deut. 10. 11, 12. *When thou hast eat, and art full, Then beware lest thou forget the Lord thy God.* Then beware, that's the ritical time; surely that man must be acnowledged rich, very rich in grace, whose race suffers no diminution or eclipse by his iches; and that man deserves double hoour, whose pride the honours of this world annot provoke and inflame.

It was a sad truth from the lips of a pious divine in *Germany* upon his death bed; eing somewhat disconsolate by reflecting upon the barrenness of his life: some friends took thence an occasion to commend him, and mind him of his painful Ministry, nd fruitful life among them; but he cryed out, *auferte ignem, adhuc enim paleas habeo*; *withdraw the fire for I have chaff in me*; meaning that he felt his ambition like chaff catching fire from the sparkles of their praises: like unto which was the saying of another, He that praiseth me, wounds me.

But to descend into the particular discoveries that prosperity and honour make of the *want* of grace in some, and of the *weakness* of grace in others; I will shew you

yon what *symptomes* of Hypocrisie appear upon some men under the Tryals of prosperity, and what signs of grace appear in others under the same tryal.

SECT. IV.

PRosperity discovers many sad symptomes of a naughty heart, and among others these are ordinarily most conspicuous.

1. *First*, It casts the hearts of some men into a *deep oblivion of God*, and makes them lay aside all care of duty: *rara fumant fælicibus Aræ*. The Altars of rich men seldom smoke. *Deut.* 32. 13, 14, 15. *Jesurun* sucked honey out of the rock, eat the fat of Lambs, and kidneys of wheat; but what was the effect of this? he kicked, and forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation; instead of lifting up their *hearts* in an humble thankful acknowledgment of Gods bounty, they lifted up the *heel* in a wanton abuse of his mercy: in the fattest earth we find the most slippery footing.

He that is truly gracious may in prosperity remit some degrees, but a Carnal heart there loseth all that which in a low condition he seemed to have. *Agurs deprecation* as to himself, no doubt was built upon his frequent observation how it was with others. *Prov.* 30. 8, 9. *Lest I be full, and deny God.* It's said in Eccles. 5. 12. *That the abundance of*

the

rich will not suffer him to sleep, and I wish
at were the worst injury it did him; but
s, it will not suffer him to *pray*, to *meditate*,
allow time and thoughts about his eternal
ncernments; he falls asleep in the lap of
osperity, and forgets that there is a *God* to
served, or a soul to be *saved*. O this is a dan-
rous symptom of a very graceless heart.

2. *Secondly*, *prosperity* meeting with a
aceless heart, makes it wholly *sensual*, and
tirely swallows up its thoughts and af-
ctions: Earthly things transform and
ld their hearts into their own similitude
d nature: the whole strength of their
ul goes out to those enjoyments. So those
aceless, yet prosperous persons are deseri-
d, Job 21. 11, 12, 13. *They take the Timbrel*
d Harp, and rejoyce at the sound of the Organ,
y spend their dayes in wealth; they take the
mbrel, not the *Bible*. *They rejoyce at the sound*
the Organ, not a word of their rejoycing
God. *They send forth their little ones in the*
ce. That is all the *Catechism* they are
ught. *They spend their days in wealth*. Their
ol etime, that precious stock and Talent
wholly laid out upon those sensitive
ings; either the pleasure of it powerfully
arms them, or the cares of it wholly en-
os their minds; that there is no time to
e for God, *They live in pleasure upon earth*,
It is *Jam.* 5. 5. Just as the fish lives in

the

the water its proper element, take him o
from these things, and put him upon spi
tual serious heavenly imployments, and
it *Piscis in arido.* Like a fish upon the d
Land.

Now though prosperity may too mu
influence, and ensnare the minds of go
men, and estrange them too much from h
venly things; yet thus to engross th
hearts, and convert them into their o
similitude and nature, so that these thi
should be the Centure of their hearts, the
ry proper element in which they live, is
terly impossible.

An Hypocrite indeed may be brought
this, because though *Janus* like, he have
faces, yet he really hath but one princip
and that is wholly carnal and earthly:
that it's easie to make all the water to
in one channel, to gather all into one en
stream, in which his heart shall pour out
its strength to the Creature.

But a Christian indeed hath a dou
principal that acts him: though he hav
law of sin, that moves him one way,
there is in him also the Law of grace, wh
thwarts and crosses that principle of cor
tion; so that as grace cannot do wha
would because of sin; so neither can sin
what it would, because of grace, *Gal.* 5. 17.

The heart of a Christian in the midst

enſnaring ſenſitive enjoyments finds indeed a corrupt principle in it, which would incline him to fall aſleep upon ſuch a ſoft pillow; and forget God and duty: but it cannot; Oh no, it cannot do ſo, there's a principle of grace within him that never leaves jogging, diſturbing, and calling upon him, till he riſe and return to his God the true reſt of his ſoul.

3. *Thirdly*, A falſe pretender to Religion, an *Hypocritical Profeſſour* meeting with proſperity and ſucceſs, grows altogether unconcerned about the intereſt of Religion, & ſenſeleſs of the calamities of Gods people. Thus the Prophet convinces the Jews of their *hypocriſie*, Amos 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *They were at eaſe in Zion, and truſted in the Mountain of Samaria*: and ſo having a ſhadow of Religion, and a fulneſs of all earthly things, they fell to feaſting and ſporting: *they drank wine in bowls, and anointed themſelves with the chief oyntment, but were not grieved for the affliction of* Joſeph: they condoled not *Gnat-ſheber* over the breakings or tearing to pieces of *Joſeph*; they are out of danger once, let the Church ſhift for it ſelf; they are ſecure in a warm neſt, let the birds of prey catch and devour that flock with which they ſometimes aſſociated, they are not toucht with it. *Moſes* could not do ſo though in the greateſt ſecurity, and confluence of the honours and

pleasures of *Egypt*, Acts 7. 23. *Nehemiah* could not do so, though the servant and *favorite* of a mighty *Monarch*, and wanted nothing to make him outwardly happy: Yet the pleasures of a *Kings Court* could not cheer his heart, or scatter the clouds of sorrow from his Countenance, whilest his brethren were in affliction, & the City of his God lay waste, *Nehem.* 2. 1, 2, 3. nor indeed can any gracious heart be unconcerned and senseless; for that Union that all the *Saints* have with *Christ their* head, and with one another as fellow members in Christ, will *beget sympathy* among them in their sufferings, 1 Cor. 12. 26.

SECT. V.

BUT as the fire of prosperity discovers this, and much more dross in a graceless heart; so it discovers the sincerity and grace of Gods people. I say not that it discovers nothing but grace in them. O that it did not! alas! many of them have had a great deal of dross and corruption discovered by it, as was noted before: but yet in this Tryal, the graciousness and uprightness of their hearts will appear in these and such like workings of it.

1. *First*, Under prosperity, success and honour, the upright heart will labour to suppress pride, and keep it self lowly & humble

and

and still the more grace there is, the more humility there will be. If God lift him up, he will lay himself low, and exalt his God high. So did *Jacob* when God had raised & enlarged him, Gen. 32. 10. *I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant, for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.*

Great was the difference in *Jacobs* outward condition at his return, from what it was at first passage over *Jordan*: then poor, now rich; then single and comfortless, now the head of a great family. Yea, but though his outward estate was altered, the frame of his heart was not altered. *Jacob* was an holy and humble man when he went out, & so he was when he returned: he saw a multitude of mercies about him, and among them all, not one but was greater than himself.

I dare not say every Christian under prosperity can at all times manifest like humility; but I am sure what pride and vanity soever may rise in a gracious heart tryed by prosperity, there's that within him, will give check to it: he dare not suffer such proud thoughts to lodge quietly in his heart: for as he sees that in himself, and that in his God that will abase him; grace will make him *look back* to his original condition, & say with *David, What am I O Lord God, and what*

is my fathers house; that thou hast brought m
hitherto? 2 Sam. 7. 18.

It will make him look in, & see the base-
ness of his own heart, and the Corruption
that are there, and admire at the Dealings o
God with so vile a Creature. O thinks he,
others did but know what I know of my sel
they would abhor me more than now the
esteem and value me.

2. *Secondly*, *Prosperity* usually draws fort
the Saints love to the God of their mercies
that which heats a wicked mans *lusts*, warm
a gracious mans *heart* with love and delig
in God.

These were the words of that lovely son
which *David* sang in the day that the Lor
delivered him out of the hand of all his e
nemies, and from the hand of *Saul*, and h
said, *I will love thee O Lord my strength*
Psalm 18. *Title and v.* 1. *compared*: these out
ward things are not the main grounds an
motives of their love to God; no, no, the
love him when he takes away, as well, as whe
he gives: but they are sanctified instrumen
to inflame their love to God: they *boyle* u
a wicked mans *lusts*, but they *melt* a grac
ous mans soul. O in what a pang of lo
did *David* go into the presence of God un
der the sense of his mercies? *his melting mer*
cies; when he thus poured out his who
soul in a stream of love to his God, 2 Sa

7. 19, 20. *Is this the manner of men, O Lord God! and what can David say more unto thee!* an expression that turns up the very bottom of his heart.

3. *Thirdly*, *Prosperity* and comfortable providences do usually become *cautions* against sin when they meet with a sanctified soul. This is the natural inference of a gracious soul from them, Hath God pleased me, then hath he obliged me to take more care to please him. O let me not grieve him, that hath comforted me. So *Ezra* 9. 13. *After such a deliverance, as this, should we again break thy Commandments*! what! break his Commandments who hath broken our bonds! God forbid.

It was an excellent resolution of a *Christian* once, who receiving an eminent mercy, at the same time he felt himself under the power of a special Corruption; Well, (saith he) now will I go forth in the strength of this mercy to mortifie and subdue that Corruption. I will not measure every Christian by the eminent workings of grace in some one; but surely so far I may safely go, That sincerity knows not how to sin, because grace hath abounded, any more than it dare sin, that grace may abound.

4. *Fourthly*, A truly gracious soul will not be satisfied with all the prosperity and comforts in the world for his portion. *Not thine*

Lord, but thee is the voice of grace: when providence had been more than ordinarily bountiful in outward things to *Luther*, he began to be afraid of its meaning, and earnestly protested, God should not put him off so. *The Lord is my portion saith my soul*, Lam. 3. 2, 4. and the soul can best tell what it hath made its choice, and whereon it hath bestowed its chief delights and expectations.

An unsound heart will accept these for its portion: if the world be sure to him, and his designs fail not there; he can be content to leave God, and soul, and heaven, and hell at hazard: but so cannot the upright. These things in *subordination*; but neither these, nor any thing under the Sun in *Comparison* with, or *opposition* to God.

CHAP. V.

Shewing what probation Adversity makes of the sincerity or unsoundness of our hearts.

SECT. I. THat *Adversity* is a *furnace* to try of what metal our hearts are, none can doubt, that hath either studied the Scriptures, or observed his own heart under afflictions.

When the dross and rust of Hypocrisie and Corruption had almost eaten out the heart of Religion among the *Jews*; then saith God,

God, *I will melt them, and try them; for what shall I do for the daughter of my People?* Jer. 9. 7. here Affliction is the Furnace, and the People are the metal cast into it; and the end of it is Tryal. *I will melt them and try them*; what other course shall I take with them? If I let them alone, their Lusts like the rust and Canker in metals will eat them out. Prosperity multiplies Professors, & adversity brings them to the test: then *Hirelings* quickly become *changlings:* the gilded *potshard* glisters till it come to scouring. The Devil thought *Job* had been such a one, and moves that he may be tried this way; being confident he would be found but dross in the tryal, *Job* 1. 11. But tho' the Furnace of Affliction discovered some dross in him, (as it will in the best of men) yet he came forth as gold.

In this Furnace also grace is manifested: 'tis said, *Rev.* 13. 10. *Here is the patience and faith of the Saints:* (i. e.) here is the trial and discovery of it in these days of Adversity. It was a weighty saying of *Tertullian* to the persecutors of the Church in his days, *probatio innocentiæ nostræ, est iniquitas vestra.* Your wickedness is the trial of our innocency. *Constantius* the Father of *Constantine* made an exploratory decree, that all who would not renounce the Christian Faith, should lose their places of honour and profit; This presently separa-

Tertul. in Apol.

ted the *droſs* from the *gold*; which was his deſign: for many renounced Chriſtianity, and thereupon were renounced by him; and thoſe that held their integrity, were received into favour.

In time of Proſperity, Hypocriſie lies covered in the heart like *neſts* in the green *buſhes*; but when the *Winter* of adverſity hath made them bare, every body may ſee them without ſearching.

But to fall into cloſer particulars, it will be neceſſary to enquire what effects of adverſity are common to both the ſound, and the unſound; and then what are proper to either in this cloſe trial by Adverſity.

SECT. II.

IT will be expedient to the deſign I manage in this diſcourſe, to ſhew in the firſt place what are common effects of adverſity to both the godly and ungodly, for in ſome things they differ not, but as it is with the one, ſo alſo with the other: as,

1. *Firſt*, Both the godly and ungodly may fear Adverſity before it comes. To be ſure a wicked man cannot, and it's evident many godly men do not come up to the height of that rule, *Jam.* 1. 2. *To account it all Joy when they fall into divers temptations*, or trials by Adverſity.

'Tis ſaid, *Iſa.* 33. 14. *The ſinners in Sion are afraid,*

afraid, trembling surprizeth the Hypocrite. Namely, under the apprehension of approaching calamities: and it's true also, the *Saints in Sion* may be afraid: *my flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgements*; said holy *David*, *Psal.* 119. 120. & *Job* 3. 23. *The thing which I greatly feared* (saith that upright soul) *is come upon me*: there is a vast difference betwixt a Saints first meeting with afflictions, and his parting with them: he entertains them sometimes with trembling, he parts with them rejoycing, smiling on them, and blessing them in the name of the Lord. So that by this the upright, and the false heart, are not discriminated: even sanctified nature declines sufferings and troubles.

2. *Secondly*, Both the godly and ungodly may entertain afflictions with regret and unwillingness when they come: afflictions and troubles are Wormwood and Gall, *Lam.* 3. 19. and that goes not down pleasantly with flesh and blood, *Heb.* 12. 11. *No affliction for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous*; he means to God's own People. They are *in heaviness* through manifold temptations or trials by the rod: 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. When God gives the cup of affliction into the hands of the wicked, how do they reluctate and loath it? How do their stomachs rise at it? And though the portion of the Saints cup be much sweeter

than theirs, (for that bitter ingredient of Gods vindictive wrath is not in it) yet even they shrink from it, and loth they are to taste it.

3. *Thirdly*, Both the one and other may be impatient and fretful in adversity: it's the very nature of flesh and blood to be so. *The wicked are like the troubled sea which cannot rest; whose waters cast forth mire and dirt*, Isa. 57. 20. It's an allusion to the unstable and stormy *Ocean*: You know there is naturally an estuation, and working in the Sea, whether it be incensed by the wind or no; but if a violent wind blow upon the unquiet *Ocean*, Oh what raging and foaming is there! what abundance of trash and filth doth it at such times cast out!

Now, though grace make a great difference betwixt one and another, yet I dare not say, but even a gracious heart may be very unquiet and tumultuous in the day of affliction. Sanctified souls have their Passions and Lusts which are too little mortified, even as *Sweet-bryar*, and *Holy-thistles* have their prickles, as well as the worthless bramble. *Jonah* was a good Man, yet his Soul was sadly distempered by adverse providences: *Jonah* 4. 9. *Yea* (saith he, and that to his God) *I do well to be angry, even unto death.*

4. *Fourthly*, Both the one and the other may be weary of the rod, and think the day of

of adversity a tedious day, wishing it were once at an end. *Babylon* shall be weary of the evil that God will bring upon it, *Jer* 51. *ult*, and oh that none of *Sions Children* were weary of adversity too! How sad a moan doth *Job* make of his long continued affliction, *Job* 16. 6, 7. *though I speak, my grief is not assuaged, and though I forbear, what am I eased? but now he hath made me weary.*

And if you look into *Psal.* 6. 3,6. you may see another strong Christian even tyred in the way of affliction: *My soul* (saith *David* in that place) *is sore vexed, but thou O Lord how long! I am weary with my groaning.*

5. *Fifthly*, Both the one and other may be driven to their knees by adversity. *Lord in trouble have they visited thee, they have poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.* Isa. 26. 16. Not that a godly person will pray no longer than the rod is at his back; O no, he cannot live without prayer long, how few calls soever he hath to that duty by the rod: but when the rod is on his *back*, he will be more frequently, and more fervently upon his *knees*: indeed many graceless hearts are like *Childrens Tops* which will go no longer than they are whipt; they cannot find their knees and their tongues, till God find a rod to excite them. A dangerous *symptome*. The same affliction may put a gracious and a graceless soul to their knees; but the

in the external matter of duty, and in the external call or occasion of duty they seem to agree; yet is there a vast difference in the principles, manner, and ends of these their duties; as will evidently appear in its proper place in our following discourse.

But by what hath been said in this *Section* you may see how in some things the holy upright soul acts too like the unsanctified, and in other things how much the *Hypocrite* may act like a Saint: he may be externally humbled, so was *Ahab*: he may pray under the rod, *Mal.* 2. 13. yea and request others to pray for him, so did *Simon*, Acts 8. 24.

SECT. III.

BUt though the sound and unsound heart differ not in some external carriages under the rod; yet there are effects of adversity which are proper to either, and will discriminate them. To which end let us first see what effects adversity is usually followed withal in unsound and carnal hearts: and we shall find among other, these *five symptomes* of a naughty heart appearing under crosses and afflictions.

1. *First*, A Graceless heart is not quickly and easily brought to see the hand of God in those troubles that befall it, and be duly affected with it, *Isa.* 26. 11. *Lord when thy hand is lifted up they will not see*; when it hath smitten,

ſmitten, or is lifted up to ſmite, they ſhut their eyes: 'tis the malice of this man, or the negligence of that, or the unfaithfulneſs of another that hath brought all this trouble upon me: thus the Creature is the *Horizon* that terminates their ſight, and beyond that they uſually ſee nothing: ſometimes indeed the hand of God is ſo immediately manifeſted, and convincingly diſcovered in afflictions, that they cannot avoid the ſight of it, and then they may (in their way) pour out a prayer before him, but ordinarily they impute all to ſecond cauſes, and overlook the firſt cauſe of their troubles.

2. *Secondly*, Nor is it uſual with theſe Men under the rod to retire into their Cloſets, and ſearch their hearts there; to find out the particular cauſe and provocation of their affliction: *No man repented him of his wickedneſs, ſaying what have I done?* Jer. 8. 6. what curſed thing is there with me, that hath thus incenſed the anger of God againſt me? God viſits their iniquities with *afflictions*, but they viſit not their own hearts by *ſelf-examinations*. God judges them, but they judge not themſelves; he ſhews their iniquities in a clear glaſs, but none ſaith, *What have I done?* This phraſe, *What have I done?* is the voice of one that recollects himſelf after a raſh action; or the voice of a Man aſtoniſhed at the diſcovery afflictions make of his

ſins,

sins, but no such voice as this is ordinarily heard among carnal Men.

3. *Thirdly*, An unsound Professor if left to his choice, would rather chuse *Sin* than *Affliction*; and sees more evil in that, than in this.

And it cannot be doubted if we consider the principle by which all unregenerate Men are acted, is *sense* not *faith*: hence *Job*'s friends would have argued his Hypocrisie *Job* 36. 21. and had their *application* been as their *rule*, it would have concluded it. *This* (*viz.* Sin) *hast thou chosen, rather than affliction.*

I do not say that an upright man cannot commit a *moral* evil, to escape a *pœnal* evil. O that daily observation did not too plentifully furnish us with sad instances of that kind! but upright ones do not, dare not upon a serious deliberate discussion and debate chuse sin rather than affliction; what they may do upon surprisals, and in the violence of temptation is of another nature.

But a false and unsound heart discovers itself in the choice it makes upon deliberation and that frequently, when sin and trouble come in competition: put case, saith *Augustine*, a *Ruffian* should with one hand set the cup of drunkenness to thy mouth, & with the other a dagger to thy breast; and say, *drink or die*: thou shouldst rather chuse to die sober, than to live a *drunkard*: and many Christian

stians have resisted unto blood striving against sin, and with renowned *Moses* chosen affliction, the worst of afflictions; yea death it self in the most formidable appearance, rather than sin: and it is the habitual temper and resolution of every gracious heart so to do, tho' those holy resolutions are sometimes over-born by violence of temptation.

But the *Hypocrite* dreads less the defilement of his soul, than the loss of his estate, liberty or life. If you ask upon what ground then doth the Apostle suppose, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. a man may give his body to be burnt, and not have charity? that the *Salamander* of Hypocrisie may live in the flame of *Martyrdom*? The answer is at hand, they that chose death in the sense of this Text, do not chose it to escape sin, but to feed and indulge it. Those strange adventures (if any such be) are rather to maintain their own honour, and enrol their names among worthy and famous Persons to Posterity; or out of a blind zeal to their espoused erours and mistakes; than in a due regard to the glory of God, and the preservation of integrity. I fear to speak it, but it must be spoken; (saith *Hierom.*) that even Martyrdom it self, when suffered for admiration and applause, profits nothing; but that blood is shed in vain.

Timeo dicere, sed dicendum est; martyrium ipsum si ideo fiat ut admirationi & laudi habeatur à fratribus; frustrà sanguis effusus est. Hier.

4. *Fourth-*

4. *Fourthly*, It is the property of an unregenerate soul under adversity to turn from creature to creature for support and comfort, and not from every creature to God alone. So long as their feet can touch ground I mean feel any creature relief or comfort under them, they can subsist and live in afflictions; but when they lose ground, the all creature refuge fails, then their heart fail too.

Thus *Zedekiah* and the self-deceiving *Jews*, when they saw their own strength failed them, and there was little hope left that they should deliver themselves from the *Chaldeans*, what do they in that strait? Do they with upright *Jehoshaphat* say, *our eyes are unto thee*? No, no, their eyes were upon *Egypt* for succour, not upon Heaven: We *Pharaoh* and his aids are left still, all hope not gone: *Jer.* 37. 9. See the like in *Ahaz* in a sore plunge and distress he Courts the King of *Assyria* for help, 2 *Chron.* 22. 28, 2 That project failing, why then he will try what the Gods of *Damascus* can do for him any way rather than the right way, *Flectere si nequeam superos, Acheronta movebo.*

So it is with many others. If one child die, what do they do, run to God and comfort themselves in this, *The Lord liveth* that my Child die? If an Estate be lost and a Family sinking, do they with *David* comfort themselves

emſelves in the *everlaſting Covenant*, order- and ſure? No, no; but if one Relation e, there's another alive; if an Eſtate be ne, yet not all: ſomething is left ſtill, and e caſe will mend.

As long as ever ſuch Men have any viſible couragement, they will hang upon it; and t make up all in Chriſt, and encourage emſelves in the Lord. To tell them of re- ycing in the Lord, when the Fig tree bloſ- ms not, is what they cannot underſtand.

5. *Fifthly*, To conlude, An unſound heart ever comes out of the Furnace of affliction rged, mortified, and more ſpiritual and ho- than when he was caſt into it: his ſcum d droſs is not there ſeparated from him: y the more they are afflicted, the worſe ey are. *Why ſhould ye be ſmitten any more? ye ill revolt more and more*, Iſa. 1. 5. and to ep to our Metaphor, conſult *Jer.* 6. 29. od had put that incorrigible people into e Furnace of affliction, and kept them long that fire; and what was the Iſſue? why, ith the Prophet, *The bellows are burnt, e lead is conſumed of the fire, the founder mel- b in vain*, &c. *reprobate ſilver ſhall men call em, becauſe the Lord hath rejected them.*

If the fire of affliction be continually own till the very bellows be burnt, that is, *tongue* or rather the *lungs* of the *Prophet*, hich have ſome reſemblance to bellows; though

though these be even spent in reproving and threatning, and denouncing woe upo woe, and Judgement upon Judgement; an God fulfills his word upon them; yet st they are as before; the dross remains: thoug *Jerusalem* be made a *Furnace*, and the inh bitants, the flesh boyling in it over a fierc fire of affliction; yet as it is noted (pert nently to my Discourse) in *Ezek.* 24. 6. 1 *the scum remains with them*, and cannot b separated by the fire; and the reason plain, because no affliction in its self purg sin, but as it is sanctified, and works in th vertue of Gods blessing, and in pursuanc of the promises

O think on this you that have had thou sands of afflictions in one kind and another and none of them all have done you good they have not mortified humbled, or bene fited you at all. And thus you see what th effects of adversity are when it meets graceless heart.

SECT IV.

BY this time, *Reader*, I suppose thou ar desirous to know what effects *adversity* and *afflictions* use to have when they mee with an honest and sincere heart; only be fore I come to particulars, I think it needfu to acquaint thee, That the fruits of afflictio are mostly *after-fruits*, and not so discern

by the Christian himself under the *rod*, after he hath been exercised by it, *Heb.* 12. 11. and calmly reflects upon what is past; for doth every Christian attain the same measure and degree: some *rejoyce*, others commonly *submit*: but I think these seven effects are ordinarily found in all upright hearts that pass under the rod.

1. First, The sincere and upright soul betakes its self to God in affliction, *Job* 1. 20. When God was *smiting*, *Job* was *praying*: when God *afflicted*, *Job worshipped*: So *David*, Psal. 116. 3, 4. *I found sorrow and trouble, then called I upon the name of the Lord*; and when the messenger of *Satan* buffeted *Paul*, *for this cause* (saith he) *I besought the Lord thrice* 2 Cor. 12. 8. Alas, whither should a child go in distress but to its Father?

2. *Secondly*, He sees, and owns the hand of God in his afflictions: how much or little soever of the instruments of trouble appear. *The Lord hath taken away*, saith *Job*, Job 1. 21. God hath bidden him, saith *David*, 2 Sam. 16. 10. If the blow come from the hand of a wicked man, yet he sees that wicked hand in Gods righteous hand, *Psal.* 17. 14. And this apprehension is fundamental to all that communion men have with God in their afflictions, & to all that peaceableness, and gracious submission of their spirits under the rod, he that *sees* nothing of God in his *trouble* hath nothing of God in his *soul*. *Third-*

3. *Thirdly*, He can justifie God in all th afflictions and troubles that come up on him, be they never so severe. *Thou a just in all that is brought upon us*, saith *Nehemiah Nehem.* 9. 33. *Thou hast punished us less tha our iniquities deserve*, saith Ezra, Ezra 9. 13 *It is of the Lords mercy we are not consumed*, saith the *Church*, *Lam.* 3. 22. Are we in *Babylon* it's a mercy we are not in *hell*. If God *con demn* him, yet he will *justifie* God: if God cast him into a *sea of trouble*, yet he will ac knowledge in all that *sea of trouble*, there is not one *drop of injustice*. If I have not de served such usage from the hands of *men* yet I have deserved worse than this at th hands of *God*.

4. *Fourthly*, Afflictions use to melt and humble gracious hearts: there is an habitu al tenderness planted in their spirits, and a just occasion quickly draws it forth: and so usual a thing it is for gracious hearts to be humbled under the afflictings of God that *affliction* is upon that score called *humi liation*: the *effect* put for the *cause*; to shew where one is, the other will be: 2 *Cor.* 12. 21. *My God will humble me*, (i. e.) he will afflict me with the sight of your sins, and disorders: and if a gracious soul be so ap to be humbled for other mens sins, much more for his own.

5. *Fifthly*, The upright soul is inquisitive unde

der the rod to find out that evil for hich the Lord contends with him by af-ction, Job 10. 2. *Shew me wherefore thou ntendeſt with me:* and Job 34. 31. *that bich I ſee not, teach thou me: If I have done iquity, I will do no more.* So Lam. 3. 39, 4. *us ſearch and try our ways, and turn again the Lord;* in afflicting God ſearches *them*, nd under affliction they ſearch *themſelves*: illing they are to hear the voice of the rod, nd glad of any diſcovery it makes of eir hearts.

6. *Sixthly*, The upright heart chuſeth to e under affliction, rather than to be deli-ered from it by ſin. I ſay this is the choice nd reſolution of every upright heart, how-er it may be ſometimes over-born by the iolence of temptation, Heb. 11. 35. *not ac-epting deliverence, viz.* upon ſinful terms, and onditions.

They are ſenſible how the fleſh ſmarts nder the rod, but had rather it ſhould ſmart, han conſcience ſhould ſmart under guilt. ffliction ſaith an upright ſoul grieves me, t ſin will grieve God; affliction wounds y fleſh, but ſin will wound my ſoul. Deli-rance I long for, but I will not pay ſo ar for it, how much ſoever I deſire it. *Nolo ti emere pœnitentiam*: outward eaſe is weet, but inward peace is ſweeter.

7. *Seventhly*, He prizeth the ſpiritual good gotten

gotten by affliction, above deliverance fro it; and can bless God from his heart f those mercies how near soever his flesh ha paid for them, *Psal.* 119. 67. and 71. *It good for me that I have been afflicted.* Such the value the people of God have for sp ritual graces, that they cannot think the a dear peny worth, whatever their flesh ha paid for them. The mortification of one Lu one discovery of sincerity, one manifesta on of God to their souls, doth much mo than make amends for all that they ha endured under the rod.

Is patience improved, self-acquaintan increased, the vanity of the Creature mo effectually taught, longings after heaven i flamed? O blessed afflictions that are attend ed with such blessed fruits! It was the say ing of a holy man under a sore troub for the death of an only Son; when in th dark day God had graciously manifeste himself to his soul; O said he, I would b contented (if it were possible) to lay a only Son in the grave every day I have t live in the world, for one such discovery o the love of God as I now enjoy.

CHA

CHAP. VI.

Shewing Indwelling sin to be to grace, what fire is to gold; and how the soundness and unsoundness of our hearts are discovered by our Carriage toward it.

SECT. I. PRosperity and adversity put sincerity to the tryal, but nothing makes a deeper search into our bosomes, nothing sifts our spirits more narrowly, or tells us what our state is more plainly than our behaviour towards that corruption that dwells in us; the thorn is next neighbour the rose: sin and grace dwell not only the same soul, but in the same faculties. The *Collier* and *Fuller* dwell in one room, that one cleanseth the other blacks: of all the evils God permits in this world, none more grievous to his people than this: they sometimes wonder why the Lord will suffer it to be so; why, surely among other wise and holy ends of this permission, these are some.

They are left to try you, and to humble you; there is no intrinsecal goodness in sin, yet however in, this it occasions good to us, that by our carriage towards it we discern our sincerity. The touch-stone is a worthless stone in it self, but it serves to try the gold: Joh. 3. 9, 10, *Whosoever is born of God; doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he*

he cannot sin, because he is born of God; in the Children of God are manifest, and the C dren of the Devil; q. d. in respect of their riage towards sin, the one & other is pla manifested: this is that which separates *dross* from the *gold*, and shews you what true state of Mens Persons, and tempe their hearts is. By not *sinning* we are no understand a total freedom from it in World, as if it implied any such perfec of the People of God in this World, t the *Popish* and *Pelagian* sense: nor yet n we take it in the *Arminian* sense, who t void the Argument of the *Orthodox*, will derstand it of the sin against the Holy Gh what a strange thing would it be to m that a Characteristical note of distinction twixt the godly and ungodly, which so few even of the most ungodly are guilty of?

But the manner of our behaviour tow sin, and our carriage towards it before under, or after the commission of it; in the Children of God are manifest, and Children of the Devil.

Now there are five things relating t that discriminate and mark the state of Persons; the difference is discernable,

In our
1. Abſtinence for Sin.
2. Hatred of Sin.
3. Troubles about Sin.
4. Subjection to Sin.
5. Oppoſition of Sin.

SECT. II.

THE Grounds and Motives of our abſtinence do very clearly manifeſt e ſtate of our ſouls; what they are in the enerate, and unregenerate, is our next rk. And let it be conſidered,

Firſt, Tha. an unſound and unrenewed rt may abſtain from one ſin, becauſe it contrary to, and inconſiſtent with ano- r ſin: for it is with the ſins of our na- es, as it is with the diſeaſes of our bodies: ough all diſeaſes be contrary to health, yet ne diſeaſes (as the Feaver and Palſie) are ntrary to each other. So are prodigality d Covetouſneſs, Hypocriſie, and Profane- s: theſe oppoſe each other, not for mu- l deſtruction as ſin and grace do, but for eriority, each contending for the throne, d ſometimes taking it by turns: it is with h perſons as with that poſſeſſed man, *Luk.* 17. 15. whom the ſpirit caſt ſome- es into the fire, ſometimes into the water: if one ſubdue the other, yet the heart is ſubdued to the vaſſalage of that luſt that uppermoſt in the ſoul.

2. *Secondly,* An unrenewed ſoul may be kept from the commiſſion of ſome ſin; not becauſe there is a principle of grace with him, but becauſe of ſome providential reſtraint without him, or upon him: for it often falls out, that when men have conceived ſin and are ready to execute it, providence claps on the fetters of reſtraint, and hinders them from executing it.

This was the caſe of *Abimelech, Gen.* 20. 6. and 17. compared, *I withheld thee*: Although perſons ſo reſtrained, have not the good of ſuch providences, yet others have for by it a world of miſchief is prevented in the world, which otherwiſe would break out; & to this act of providence we owe our lives, liberties, eſtates & comforts in this world.

3. *Thirdly,* An unſound heart may not commit ſome ſins; not becauſe he truly hates them, but becauſe his conſtitution inclines him not to them: theſe men are rather for holding to a good temper of body, than to a gracious temper of ſoul. Some men cannot be drunkards if they would; others cannot be covetous and baſe, they are made *è meliore luto* of a more refined metal than others; chaſt and liberal, juſt & ſober nature, & nature ſtill: the beſt nature in all its endowments, is but nature at the beſt.

4. *Fourthly,* A graceleſs heart may be reſtrained from ſin by the force of educa-

principles of morality that way instilled it. Thus *Jehoash* was restrained from 2 *Kings* 12. 2. and *Jehoash did that which right in the sight of the Lord all the dayes wherein Jehojadah the Priest instructed him.* fear of a Parent or Master, will do reat deal more with some in this case, the fear of God. The influence of a education nips off the excrescencies of ding vice. The way we are taught when g, we keep when *old*: this is the influe of man upon man; not the influence he regenerating spirit upon men.

Fifthly. A Graceless heart may be kept some sins by the fear of the *events*, both his world, and that to come. Sin that is owed with infamy and reproach among , may on this ground be forborn; not use God hath *forbiden it*, but because humane laws will *punish it*, and the sober world brand us for it: and some look farther, e punishment of sin in *hell*: they are not d to *sin*, but they are afraid to *burn*. ere sin is like a sweet *rose* in a brake *horns*: fain we would have it, but are to tear our flesh to come by it. It's that sin is prevented any way, but to pt on this ground from sin, doth not e the estate of the person to be good: us you see some of the grounds on which l men are restrained: & in this *the children devil are manifest.*

SECT. III.

BUt there are grounds of abstinence from sin, by which *the children of God are manifested*, and such are these that follow.

1. *First*, A sincere heart dares not sin because of the *eye and fear of God* which is on him: So you find it in *Job* 31. 1. 4. he durst not allow his thoughts to sin because he lived under the awe of God. *Nehemiah* durst not do as former Governors had done: though an opportunity presented to enrich himself; *because of the fear of God*, Nehem. 5. 15. The soul that lives under the awe of this eye will be as cautelous and circumspect where no discovery can be made by Creatures, as if all the world looked on, Levit. 19. 14. *Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shalt fear thy God, I am the Lord.*

What if a man do curse the *deaf*, the deaf cannot hear him; and what if he do put a stumbling block before the *blind*, the blind cannot see him? true, but God sees, and God hears him, that's enough to a man that hath the fear of the Lord upon his heart.

2. *Secondly*, As the fear of God, so the *love of God*, is a principle of restraint from sin to the soul that is upright. This kept *Joseph* from sin, *Gen.* 39. 9. *How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*

? he speaks as a man that feels himself
nd up from sin by the goodness and love
God that had been manifested to him, *q.*
ath he delivered me from the pit into
ollo ch my envious brethren cast me? hath
t sin n so miraculous a way advanced me to
ch i his honour and power in *Egypt*? and
. 1. , after all his kindness and love to me,
o sin I sin against him? O how can I do
ods against so good, so gracious a God?
ver *Psal.* 97. 10. *ye that love the Lord hate evil.*
refo e will cry out in the hour of Temptati-
ar this thy kindness to thy friend? Dost
live thus requite the Lord for all his kind-
s c es?

ma . *Thirdly*, As the love of God, so the *in-*
oke *ical evil and filthiness that is in sin* keeps
the the gracious soul from it, *Rom.* 12. 9.
nd or that which is evil, ἀποστυγοῦντες τὸ πονηρόν,
e it as hell it self: or as the *French Tran-*
the *on* hath it, *be in horrour*: as the appre-
do sions of *hell*, so the apprehensions of *sin*
he ress horrour upon the mind that's sanctifi-
es: nothing more loathsome to an holy
na . Its aversations from it are with the
he most indignation and loathing.

th *Fourthly*, The renewed Nature of a
m t restrains him from sin, *Gal.* 5. 17. *The*
pt *lusteth against the flesh, so that ye cannot*
I *be thing that ye would*: Ye cannot, why
d. not ye? because it is against your new
ure.

Beloved, This is a very remarkable thi
in the experience of all renewed men, Th
upon the renovation of mens *principles*, th
delights, and their *aversations* and loathin
are laid quite cross and opposite to wh
they were before. In their carnal state, va
company, and sinful exercises were their
light. To be separated from these, and ty
to prayer, meditation, heavenly discourse,
company; O what a bondage would th
have been! Now be tyed to such carnal
ciety, and restrained from duties of godline
and the society of the godly, becomes a mu
sorer bondage to the soul.

5. *Fifthly, Experience of the bitterness of*
is a restraint to a gracious heart. They th
have had so many sick dayes, and sorrow
nights for sin as they have had, are loth
taste that wormwood and gall again, whi
their soul hath still in remembrance, 2 C
7. 11. *In that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, wh*
carefulness it wrought! he would not grapp
with those inward troubles again, he wou
not have the cheerful light of Gods Cou
tenance eclipsed again for all, and much mo
than all the pleasures that are in sin.

6. *Sixthly*, The Consideration of the *Suffe*
ings of Christ for sin, powerfully withholds
gracious soul from the Commission of i
Rom. 6. 6. *Our old man is Crucified with hi*
that the body of sin might be destroyed, th
henceforth

nceforth we should not serve sin. Were there *knife* or *sword* in the house that had been hurlt through the heart of your Father, would you ever endure the sight of it? sin was the word that pierced Christ, and so the death of Christ becomes the death of sin in his people. Thus the Children of God, and the Children of the Devil are manifest, in the principles and reasons of their *abstinence* from sin.

SECT. IV.

(2.) SEcondly, They are also manifested by their *hatred of sin*: this puts a clear distinction betwixt them: for no false or unregenerate heart, can hate sin as sin; he may indeed,

1. *First*, Hate sin *in another*, but not *in himself*: thus one proud man hates another, *Calco superbiam Platonis*, said *Diogines*; when he trampled *Plato*'s fine cloaths under foot; I spurn the pride of *Plato*: *Sed majori superbiâ*, as *Plato* smartly replyed, Thou trampest upon my pride, but it is with greater pride. *Why* (saith *Christ* to the *Hypocrite*) *beholdest thou the mote in thy brothers eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?* Matt. 7. 3. how quick in espying, and rash in censuring the smallest fault in another, is the Hypocrite! it was but one fault, & that but a small one, but a *mote* that he could find

in another; yet this he quickly discerns: it may be there were many excellent graces in him, these he overlooks, but the *mote* he plainly discerns.

It may be that *mote* in his brothers eye had drawn many tears from it; but these he takes no notice of; and mean while there is a *beam* (*i. e.*) a great horrid flagitious evil in himself; but it is too near him to be discerned, or bewailed: this is a sad *symptome* of a naughty heart.

2. *Secondly*, He may hate it in its *effects*, & *consequents*; not in its own *nature*: as the *Thief* hates the *Gallows*, not the wickedness that he hath done. It is not sin in it self, but sin in its connection with *Hell*, that is frightful to him.

The unsound professour could wish that there were no such threatnings in the *Bible* against sin: when sin tempts him, I would (saith he) but I fear the consequence. O sin, could I separate thee from *hell*, nothing should separate thee and me.

3. *Thirdly*, He may hate it in a *mood* or *pang*, but not with a *rooted habitual* hatred. It's plain from 2 *Pet.* 2. 22. that sin may sometimes lye upon the conscience of an unregenerate man, as a load lyes upon a sick *stomach*; and so he may discharge himself of it, by reformation, restitution, *&c.* but a little time reconciles the quarrel betwixt him

him and his Lust again: if they fall out they will fall in again; *the dog is turned to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.*

But an upright soul hates sin in another manner, and in this hatred of sin *the Children of God are manifest.*

1. *First*, the opposition of sin to God, is the very ground and formal reason upon which a gracious soul opposes and hates it: if it be opposite to the holy *nature* and *law* of *God*, it cannot but be odious in his eyes: This put *Davids* heart, *Psal.* 51. 4. *Against thee, thee only have I sinned: q. d.* I have wronged *Uriah* greatly, I have wronged my self and family greatly; but the wrong I have done to others is not worth naming, in comparison of the wrong I have done to thee.

2. *Secondly*, The upright soul hates sin *in himself*, more than he hates it *in any other*: as a man hates a *Serpent* in the *hedge*, but much more in his own *bosome*: Rom. 7 23. *But I see another Law in my members*: and ver. 21. *I find then a Law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me: q. d.* I don't know how others find it, but I am sure I find sin in my very *bosome*, in my very *bowels*, it is *present with me.* O *wretched man that I am!* a gracious soul can mourn to see in others; but to find it in himself, pierceth him to the very heart.

3. *Thirdly*, The gracious ſoul hates not only this or that *particular ſin*, but the *whole kind*, every thing that is ſinful. True hatred is πρὸς τὸ γενὶ, of the whole nature or kind, *Pſal.* 119. 104. *I hate every falſe way*; his reaſonings proceed *à quatenus ad omne*, from ſin, as ſin; concluding againſt every ſin. Sins that are profitable, and pleaſant, as well as ſins that have neither profit nor pleaſure: ſins that are *ſecret* as well as ſins that are *open*, and will defame him.

Ariſt. Rhet. lib. 2. cap. 4.

And before this tryal a falſe heart cannot ſtand; for he alwayes indulges to ſome Luſt: there is an iniquity which he cannot be ſeparated from.

4. *Fourthly*, The ſincere ſoul *hates* ſin with an *irreconcileable hatred*: there was a time when ſin and his ſoul fell out, but there never will be a time of reconciliation betwixt them again.

That breach which effectual conviction once made, can never be made up any more: *they will return no more to folly*, Pſal. 85. 8, &c. indeed it ſeems to them that have ſuffered ſo much for ſin, that have endured ſo many fears and ſorrows for it; the *greateſt* [illegible] in the world to return to ſin again: no, no, they admire the mercy of their eſcape from ſin, to their dying day; and never look back upon their former ſtate but with ſhame and grief.

As

Ask a *Convert*, would you be back again where once you were? would you be among your old companions again? would you be fulfilling the lusts of the flesh again? and he will tell you he would not run the hazard to abide one day or one night in that condition again, to gain all the Kingdoms of the world the next morning.

5. *Fifthly*, The sincere soul hates sin with a *superlative hatred*: he hates it more than any other evil in the world besides it. *Penal* evils are not pleasant themselves, but yet if he must endure them, or sin; then sufferings to chuse: *Heb.* 11. 25. *Chusing rather to suffer affliction than enjoy the pleasures of sin*; the worst of sufferings, rather than the best of sin.

6. *Sixthly*, To conclude, so deep is the hatred that upright ones bear to sin, that nothing pleases them more than the thoughts of a full deliverance from it doth: *Rom.* 7. 24. *I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* What doth he so heartily thank God for? O for a prospect of his final deliverance from sin, never to be intangled, defiled, or troubled with it any more: and this is one thing that sweetens death to the Saints, as much as any thing in the world can do, except Christs victory over it, and lying in the grave for us. To think of a *grave* is not pleasant in it self, but to think of a parting

time

time with sin, that's sweet and pleasant in deed.

SECT. V.

(3.) THirdly, The Children of God and the Children of the Devil, pure Gold, and vile dross are manifest as in hatred of sin, so in their *troubles, and sorrow about sin.*

All trouble for sin argues not sincerity some have reason to be troubled even for their troubles for sin. So have they.

1. *First*, That are only troubled for the commission of some more gross sins that startle the natural *Conscience*, but not for inward sins that defile the *soul*. *Judas* was troubled for betraying innocent blood, but not for that base Lust of Covetousness that was the root of it, or the want of sincere love to *Jesus Christ*: *Matth.* 27. 4, 5. Outward sins are sins *majoris infamiæ*, of greater *scandal*; but heart-sins are oftentimes *majoris reatus*, sins of greater *guilt*: to be troubled for grosser sins, and have no trouble for ordinary sins daily incurred, is an ill sign of a bad heart.

2. *Secondly* A graceless heart may be much troubled at the *discovery* of sin, when it is not troubled for the *guilt* of sin, Jer. 2. 26. *As the Thief is ashamed when he is found, so the house of Israel ashamed*: Hence it is that

the

hey ſtick not to commit *ten ſins* againſt *God*, o hide *one ſin* from the eyes of *men*. It is a mer- y that ſin is the matter of mens ſhame, & hat all are not arrived to that height of im- udence to declare their ſin as *Sodom*, and *glo- y in their ſhame*; but to be aſhamed only be- cauſe men ſee it, and not with *Ezra* to ſay, *O my God I am aſhamed, and bluſh to look up un- o thee*, Ezra 9. 6. aſhamed that thou ſeeſt it, s but Hypocriſie.

3. *Thirdly*, A graceleſs heart may be trou- bled for the *rod* that ſin draws after it, but not for ſin it ſelf as it provokes God to in- flict ſuch rods.

But the troubles of *upright ones* for ſin are of another kind and nature.

1. *Firſt*, They are troubled that God is wronged, & his Spirit troubled by their ſins. So the penitent *Prodigal*, *I have ſinned againſt heaven, and in thy ſight*, Luk. 15. 21, Againſt heaven, (*i. e.*) againſt him whoſe Throne is in Heaven, a great, glorious, and infinite Majeſty: a poor worm of the Earth, hath lifted up his hand againſt the God of Heaven.

2. *Secondly*, They are troubled for the *de- filement* of their own ſouls by ſin: hence they are compared in *Prov.* 25. 26. to *a troubled fountain*; you know it's the property of a li- ving ſpring when any filth falls into it, or that which lies in the bottom of its chanel is raiſed and defiles its ſtreams, never to

leave

leave working till it have purged it self of it, and recovered its purity again.

So it is with a righteous man; he loves purity in the *precept, Psal.* 119.140. and he loves it no less in the *principle* and *practice*: he thinks it is hell enough to lie under the *pollution* of sin, if he should never come under *damnation* for it.

3. *Thirdly*, They are troubled for the *estrangements of God*, and the hiding of his face from them because of their Sin. It would go close to an ingenuous spirit to see a dear and faithful friend whom he hath grieved, to look strange and shy upon him at the next meeting; as if he did not know him: much more doth it go to the heart of a gracious man to see the face of God turned from him, and not to be towards him as in times past. This went to *Davids* heart after his fall, as you may see, *Psal.* 51.11. *Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy spirit from me*; *q. d.* Lord, if thou turn thy back upon me, and estrange thy self from me, I am a lost man: that is the greatest mischief than can befal me.

4. *Fourthly*, Their troubles for sin *run deep*, to what other Mens do. They are strong to bear other troubles, but quail and faint under this: *Psal.* 38.4. other sorrows may for the present be violent, and make more noise; but this sorrow soaks deeper into the soul.

5. *Fifthly*,

5. *Fifthly*, Their troubles for sin are more *private* and *silent troubles* than others are; *their sore runs in the night*; as it is *Psal.* 77. 2. not but that they may, and do open their troubles to Men, (and it is a mercy when they meet with a judicious, tender, and experienced Christian to unbosom themselves unto:) but when all is done, it is God and thy soul alone that must whisper out the matter: *ille verè dolet, qui sine teste dolet*: that *sincere sorrow* for sin indeed, which is expressed secretly to God in the Closet.

6. *Sixthly*, Their troubles are incurable by creature comforts: it is not the removing some outward pressures and inconveniencies, that can remove their burden; nothing but pardon, peace, and witnessed reconciliation can quiet the gracious heart.

7. *Seventhly*, Their troubles for sin are *ordinate* and kept in their own place; they dare not stamp the dignity of Christs blood upon their worthless tears and groans for sin: *Lava lachrymas meas domine*, Aug. Lord, wash my sinful tears in the blood of Christ, was once the desire of a true *Penitent*. And thus our trouble for sin shews us what our hearts are.

SECT. VI.

4. FOurthly, the behaviour and carriage of the soul with respect to *subjection* to the commands of sin, shews what our estate

state and condition is. This will separat
dross from *gold*. All unregenerate men ar
the *servants of Sin*, they subject themselves t
its commands. This the Scripture sometime
calls a *Conversation in the lusts of the flesh*, Eph
2. 3. sometimes the *selling of themselves to si*
1 *King*. 21. 20. Now as a judicious *Divin*
observes, tho' the Children of God com
plain with *Paul*, Rom. 7. 14, 15. *Dr. Reynold*
that they are *sold under sin*, yet
there is a vast difference betwixt these two
the Saints are sold to it by *Adam*, but other
by their own continued consent. But to shew
you the difference in this matter, I conceiv
it necessary to shew, wherein the reignin
power of sin doth not consist, and the
wherein it doth: that you may plainly di
cern who are in subjection to the reignin
power of their corruptions, and who ar
not. Now there be divers things commo
both to the regenerate and unregenerat
and we cannot say the dominion of sin li
in any or in all of them, *viz.* abstractly an
simply considered.

1. *First*, Both one, and other having *Or*
ginal Corruption dwelling in them, may al
find this fountain breaking forth into gr
and scandalous sins: but we cannot say th
because original Corruption thus breaks fo
into gross and scandalous sins in both; ther
fore it must needs reign in the one, as w

in the other: a righteous Man may *fall before the wicked*, as it is *Prov.* 25. 26. he may ll in the dirt of groſſer iniquities, and ſurniſh them with matter of reproach. So did *David*, *Peter*, *Abraham*, and many more of e Lords upright hearted ones, whoſe ſouls evertheleſs ſin did not reign over, by a voatary ſubjection to its commands, nor muſt is embolden any to ſin with more liberty.

2. *Secondly*, Tho' an upright Soul fall once nd again into ſin, tho' he reiterate the ſame of ſin, which he hath repented of before; et it cannot meerly from thence be conuded, that therefore ſin reigns over him, it doth over a wicked Man that makes it daily trade. I confeſs every *reiteration* of , puts a farther *aggravation* upon it: and 's ſad we ſhould repent, and ſin; and ſin, d repent: but yet you read, *Prov.* 24. 16. *juſt man falleth ſeven times, and riſeth up a-n*: *Job*'s Friends were good men, yet he lls them, *Theſe ten times have ye reproached* Job 19. 3. This indeed ſhews a heart that eatly needs purging; for it is with relapſes to ſpiritual, as it is with relapſes into nal diſeaſes: a *recidivation* or return of the eaſe ſhews that the *morbifique matter* was t duly purged; but tho' it ſhew the *foul-s*, it doth not always prove the *falſeneſs* of heart.

3. *Thirdly*, Though one may be impatient of

of the reproof of his sin, as well as the other; yet that alone will not conclude sin to be in full dominion over one, as it is over the other.

It's pity any good Man should storm at a just rebuke of sin; that such a precious Oy as is proper to *heal*, should be conceited to *break* his head: but yet flesh will be tender and touchy; even in good men. *Asa* was a good man, and yet he was wroth with the *Prophet* who reproved him; as you find 2 *Chron.* 16. 10. yet I doubt not but their Consciences smite them for it, when pride suffers not another to do it: a reproof may be ill tim'd, and ill managed by another; and and so may provoke; but they will hear the voice of conscience in another manner.

4. *Fourthly*, Tho' in both some one *particular sin* may have more power than another yet neither doth this alone conclude that therefore that sin must reign in one, as it doth in another: indeed the beloved Lust of every wicked man is King over his soul; but yet a godly mans constitution, calling, &c. may incline him more to one sin than an other; and yet neither that, nor any other may be said to be in dominion; for tho' *David* speaks of *his iniquity*, (*i. e.*) his *special* *Psal.* 18. 23. which some suppose to be the sin of lying, from that intimation, *Psal.* 11 29. yet you see in one place he begs *God keep him from it*, and in the other he tells

he kept himself from it, and both shew he was not the Servant of it.

5. *Fifthly*, Tho' both may sin against knowledge, yet it will not follow from thence, that therefore sins against knowledge must needs be sins in dominion in the one, as they are in the other: there was too much light abused, and violenced in *Davids* deliberated sin; as he confesses, *Psal.* 51. 6. and the sad story it self too plainly shews; and yet in the main, *David* was an upright Man still, tho' this consideration of the fact shrewdly wounded his integrity: and stands upon record for a caution to all others.

SECT. VII.

WE have seen what doth *not* infer the dominion of sin in the former particulars, being simply considered; I shall next shew you what *doth*; and how the sincere and false heart are distinguished in this trial. And

1. *First*, *Assent* and *Consent* upon deliberation notes the soul to be under the *dominion* of sin: when the mind *approves* sin, and the will gives its *plenary consent* to it; This sets up sin in its *Throne*, and puts the soul into subjection to it: for the dominion of sin consists in its authority over us, and our voluntary subjection to it. This you find to be the character of a wicked graceless Person; *Psal.* 36.

4. *He*

4. He deviseth mischief upon his bed; he setteth himself in a way that is not good, he abhorreth not evil.

The best Men may fall into sin through mistake, or be precipitated into sin through the violence of Temptation; but to *devise mischief*, and *set himself* in an evil way; this notes full assent of the mind, and then *not to abhor evil*, notes full consent of the will, and these two being given to sin, not only *antecedently* to the acting of it; but also *consequently* to it: to like it afterward, as well as before; this puts the soul fully under the power of sin; what can it give more?

This (as one saith) in direct opposition to the *Apostle*, *Rom.* 12. 1. is to present their bodies a dead Sacrifice, unholy, and abominable to God; acceptable to the Devil, which is their unreasonable service: all Men by nature are given to sin, but these men give themselves to it. *Mr. Caryl.*

2. *Secondly*, The customary practice of sin, subjects the soul to the Dominion of sin: and so *he that is born of God, doth not commit sin*, 1 Joh. 3. 9. Fall into sin, yea the same sin he may, and that often; but then it's not without reluctance, repentance, and a *protest* entred by the soul in Heaven against it: So that sin hath not a quiet possession of his Soul; he is not the *servant of sin*, nor doth he willingly walk after its Commandments: but so do its own Servants; it's their daily practice:

Jer.

Jer. 9. 3. *They proceed from evil to evil.*

3. *Thirdly, Delight* in ſin proves the *dominion* of ſin. So the Servants of ſin are deſcribed, *Iſa.* 66. 3. *They have choſen their own ways, and their ſoul delighteth in their abominations.*

Look as our delight in God is the *meaſure of our holineſs*; ſo our delight in ſin is *the meaſure of our ſinfulneſs.* Delight in ſin is one of the uppermoſt rounds of the *Ladder*, & much higher the ſoul of a ſinner cannot go, till it be turned off into Hell. *It's a ſport to a fool to do miſchief*, Prov. 10. 23. Never merrier than when he hath the *Devil* for his play-fellow, ſaith one upon that place: Mr. *Trap.*

4. *Fourthly, Impatience of Chriſt's Yoke and Government*, argues the ſoul to be the ſubject of ſin. This is clear from the *Apoſtles* reaſoning in *Rom.* 6. 17, 18. *But God be thanked that ye were the Servants of ſin, but you have obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine which was delivered you: being then made free from ſin, ye became the ſervants of righteouſneſs*: where you ſee plainly, that no man can have his *manumiſſion* or freedom from ſin, that comes not into Chriſt's ſervice, and yields himſelf up to his obedience.

So then to fret at Chriſt's Laws that tie us up from our Luſts, to be weary of all ſpiritual imployments as a burden intolerable, never to be in our *Element* and *Centre* till we are off from God, and plunging in the world,

world, and our luſts; this is a ſad note of a ſoul in ſubjection to ſin.

Object. *But may not an upright ſoul find ſome wearineſs in ſpiritual things?*

Sol. Doubtleſs he may, for he hath *fleſh* as well as *ſpirit*, and tho' the ſpirit be willing, the fleſh is weak: he is ſanctified but in part, and his delight in the Law of God is but according to, or *after the inner man, Rom.* 7. 22. but he ſees *another law in his members*, (i.e) contrary inclinations. However, if he be weary ſometimes in the duties of Godlineſs, to be ſure he is more weary out of 'em, and is not *Centred* and at reſt till he be with his God again: But the Carnal heart is where it would be when it is in the ſervice of ſin: and as a Fiſh upon dry land, when ingaged in ſpiritual duties. Eſpecially ſuch as are ſecret, and have no external allurements of reputation to engage him to them.

But what ſurpriſals or captivities to ſin ſoever may befal an upright ſoul, yet it appears by theſe eight following particulars, that he is not the ſervant of ſin, nor in full ſubjection to it. For,

1. *Firſt*, Tho' he may be drawn to ſin, yet he cannot reflect upon his ſin without ſhame and ſorrow; which plainly ſhews it to be an involuntary ſurprize. So *Peter* wept bitterly, *Mat.* 26 75. and *David* mourned for his ſin heartily; others can fetch new pleaſures out of

f their old ſins by reflecting on them: and me can glory in their ſhame, *Phil.* 3. 19. ome are ſtupid and ſenſeleſs after ſin, and he ſorrow of a carnal heart for it, is but a orning dew: but it is far otherwiſe with od's people.

2. *Secondly*, Tho' a Saint may be drawn ſin, yet it is not with a deliberate and full nſent of his will: their delight is in the law God, *Rom.* 7. 22. *They do that which they ould not*, ver. 16. (*i. e.*) there are inward ſlikes from the new nature: and as for that ſe of *David*, which ſeems to have ſo much counſel and deliberation in it; yet it was t in a ſingle *act*; it was not in the general *urſe* of his life: he was upright in all things *e.*) in the general courſe and tenour of his e, 1 *King.* 15. 5.

3. *Thirdly*, Tho' an upright ſoul may fall to ſin, yet he is reſtleſs and unquiet in that ondition; like a bone out of joynt: and at ſpeaks him to be none of ſins Servants: on the contrary, if a Man be ingaged in e external duties of Religion, and be reſt-ſs and unquiet there; his heart is not in it, is not at reſt till he be again in his earth-buſineſs; this Man cannot be reckoned riſts Servant: a gracious heart is much ter that rate imployed in the work of ſin, at a carnal heart is when imployed in the ork of Religion: that's a good rule, *ea tan-*

tum

tam dicuntur ineſſe, quæ inſunt per modum qu
tis: that's a mans true temper wherein
is at reſt: poor *David* fell into ſin, but he
no reſt in his bones becauſe of it, *Pſal.* 51.
11, 12. if his heart be off from God and
ty for a little while, yet he recollects hi
ſelf, and ſaith, as *Pſal.* 116. 7. *Return unto*
reſt O my ſoul.

4. *Fourthly,* Tho' a ſincere Chriſtian
into ſin, and commit evil; yet he *proceeds*
from evil to evil, as the ungodly do: *Jer.* 9.
but makes his fall into one ſin, a caution
prevent another ſin. *Peter* by his fall got e
bliſhment for time to come: if God
ſpeak peace to them, they are careful to
turn no more to folly, *Pſal.* 85. 8. *In that*
ſorrowed after a godly ſort, what carefulne
wrought? yea what fear? 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. It is
ſo with the Servants of ſin, one ſin lea
them much more diſpoſed to another ſin.

5. *Fifthly,* A ſincere *Chriſtian* may be dra
to ſin, but yet he would be glad with all
heart to be rid of ſin. It would be more
him than thouſands of gold or ſilver, that
might grieve and offend God no more;
that ſhews ſin is not in dominion over hi
he that is under the dominion of ſin, is
to leave his Luſts. Sins ſervants are not
ling to part with it, they hold it faſt, and
fuſe to let it go, as that Text expreſſes it,
8. 5. but the great complaint of the up

expressed by the *Apostle* according to the true sense of their hearts, in *Rom.*7.24. *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

6. *Sixthly*, It appears they yield not themselves willingly to obey sin, in as much as it is the matter of their joy when God orders any providence to prevent sin in them: *Blessed be the Lord* (said *David* to *Abigail*) *and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, that hast kept me this day from shedding blood*, 1 Sam. 25.32,33. Here's blessing upon blessing for a sin-preventing providence. The Author is blessed, the Instrument blessed, the Means blessed: O it's a blessed thing in the eyes of a sincere man to be kept from sin: he reckons it a great deliverance, a very happy escape if he be kept from sin.

7. *Seventhly*, This shews that some who may be drawn to commit sin, yet are none of the Servants of sin, That they do heartily beg the assistance of grace to keep them from sin: *keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins* (saith the *Psalmist*, Psal. 19.13.) *let them not have dominion over me*; *q. d.* Lord, I find propensions to sin in my nature; yea, & strong ones too; if thou leave me to my self, I am carried into sin as easily as a Feather down the Torrent. O *Lord keep back thy servant*: and there is no petition that upright ones pour out their hearts to God in, either more frequently, or more ardently than in this, to be kept back from sin.

8. *Eighthly*, and *Lastly*, This shews the soul not to be under the dominion of sin, that it doth not only cry to God to be kept back from sin, but uses the means of prevention himself; he resists it, as well as prays against it, *Psal.* 18. 23. *I was also upright before him, and kept my self from mine iniquity*, So *Job* 31. 1. *I have made a Covenant with mine eyes*; and yet more fully in *Isa.* 33. 15. *he shaketh his hands from holding bribes, and stoppeth his ears from hearing blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.* See with what care the *portals* are shut at which sin useth to enter. All these things are very relieving considerations to poor souls questioning their integrity under the frequent surprisals of sin. And the next tryal no less.

SECT VIII.

(5.) *Fifthly*, Our *opposition* to and *conflicts* with sin, discover what we are gold or dross.

There are *conflicts* with sin both in the regenerate, and in the unregenerate; but there is a vast difference betwixt them, as will appear in the following account.

1. *First*, There is an *universal*, and there is a *particular* opposition to sin; the former is found in regenerate, the latter in unregenerate souls: a gracious heart hates every false way, *Psal.* 119. 104. and must needs do so because he hates and opposes sin as sin;

at he can no *peccatum in deliciis*; no ex-
pted or reserved Lust; but fights against
e whole body, and every limb and mem-
r of the body of sin.

But it is not so with the *Hypocrite* or car-
l Professor: he hath evermore some reser-
d sin, that he cannot part with.

2. *Secondly*, There is an opposition be-
ixt the *new nature* and sin, and there is an
position betwixt *natural Conscience* and sin;
e former is the case of an upright soul, the
er may be of a self-deceiver.

A regenerate Person opposeth sin, because
ere is an irreconcileable *Antipathy* betwixt
and the new nature in him, as is clear
m Gal. 5. 17. *The flesh lusteth against the spi-
, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are
trary the one to the other*: by flesh under-
nd corrupt Nature; by spirit not only the
rit of Man, but the spirit of *God*, or prin-
ple of Regeneration in Man: by the lust-
of these two against each other, under-
nd the desire and endeavour of each others
truction and ruine: and the ground of all
is the contrariety of these two natures.
These are contrary one to the other: there is
wofold opposition betwixt them, one *for-*
, their very *natures* are opposite; the
r *effective*, their workings and designs are
posite, as it is betwixt fire and water.
ut the oppositions found in unrenewed

Souls againſt ſin, is not from their nature for ſin is ſuitable enough to that; but fro the light that is in their minds and conſc ences which ſcares and terrifies them. Suc was that in *Darius*, Dan. 6. 14. *He was ſo diſpleaſed with himſelf, and ſet his heart on Dan to deliver him; and laboured till the going dow of the Sun to deliver him*: here the conteſt w betwixt ſenſe of honour upon one ſide, an conviction of Conſcience on the other ſid

Sometimes a generous and noble diſpoſi on oppoſes ſordid and baſe actions: *Maj ſum, & ad majora natus; quam ut corporis u ſim mancipium.* I am greater, and born greater things; than that I ſhould be a ſla to my Body, ſaid a brave *Heathen*.

3. Thirdly, There is a *permanent*, and the is a *tranſient* oppoſition to ſin; the former the caſe of God's People, the latter of tem porary and unſound Profeſſors.

The Saint when he draws the *ſword* this warfare againſt ſin, throws away t *ſcabbard*; no end of this combate with ſin life end; their life and their troubles are niſhed together, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. *I have fought good fight, and have finiſhed my Courſe.*

But in other Men it is but a tranſie quarrel; out with ſin one day, and in an ther; and the reaſon is plain by what w noted before; it is not the oppoſition two natures; it is like the oppoſition of

W

Wind and *Tyde*, theſe may be contrary and make a ſtormy ſea to day; but the wind may come about, and go as the Tyde goes to morrow: but in a Chriſtian it is as the oppoſition of the *river* and the *dam*, one muſt give way to the other, there's no reconciling them: but the other like the dog, returns to his *vomit*, 2 *Pet.* 2. *ult.*

4. *Fourthly*, There is an oppoſition to the *root* of ſin, and an oppoſition to the *fruits* of ſin. A gracious ſoul oppoſeth root and fruit, but others the latter only. The great deſign of an upright ſoul, is not only to lop off this or that branch, but to kill the root of ſin which is in his nature, *Rom.* 7. 24. *Who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* but the great care and endeavours of others is to ſuppreſs outward acts of ſin, and eſcape the miſchievous conſequents of it: yea, their ſtudy is as *Lactantius* phraſeth it, *Potius abſcondere, quam abſcindere vitia*: to hide, rather than to kill their Luſts.

5. *Fifthly*, There is an oppoſition to ſin, *in the ſtrength of God*, and an oppoſition to ſin, *in our own ſtrength*: The former is proper to a real Chriſtian, the later is found frequently with unſanctified perſons: when a Chriſtian goes forth againſt any ſin, it is in the ſtrength of God: So you read their rule directs them, *Eph.* 6. 10. *Be ſtrong in the Lord, and the power of his might: take unto*

you the whole armour of God: and ſuitab
you ſhall find them frequently upon the
knees begging ſtrength from heaven again
their Luſts; 2 *Cor.* 12. 8. *For this cauſe I b
ſought the Lord thrice*, ſaith *Paul* (*i. e.*) ofte
and earneſtly, that the temptation migh
depart from him.

But Others go forth againſt ſin only i
the ſtrength of their own reſolutions; ſo di
Pendleton in our ſtory: theſe Reſolutions,
vows which they have put themſelves unde
are as frequently fruſtrated, as made.

6. Sixtbly, There is a *ſucceſsful* oppoſitio
to ſin, and an oppoſition that comes to *no
thing*. The former is that of true Chriſtian
the later is found among unregenerate men

The work of Mortification in the Saint
is *progreſſive*, and increaſing: hence *Rom.* 6.6
Our old man is Crucified with him, that *the b
dy of ſin might be deſtroyed*. Sin dyes in be
lievers much what as crucified perſons uſe t
dye; *viz.* a ſlow, lingering, gradual, bu
ſure death: its vigour and life expires by
degrees: or as a conſumptive perſon dyes
for to that alſo he alludes here: there is
diſeaſe which is called *Conſumptio totius*,
Conſumption of the whole, and thoſe tha
dye of that diſeaſe languiſh more and more,
till at laſt they drop *ſenſim, ſine ſenſu*, by
imperceptible degrees and ſteps into the
grave.

But

But in the unregenerate whatever conflicts they have with ſin; no corruption falls before it: it may be ſaid of them as the Church in another caſe complains of herſelf, *Iſa.* 26. 18. *We have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind, we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth, neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.* So it fares with theſe profeſſours, they pray, they hear, they vow, they reſolve; but when all is done, their luſts are as ſtrong and vigorous as ever; no degree of mortification appears after all.

And thus much of the tryal of our ſincerity by our carriage towards ſin.

CHAP. VII.

Shewing what proof and tryal is made of the ſoundneſs or unſoundneſs of our graces by the duties of Religion which we perform.

SECT. I. WE now come (according to the method propoſed) to make tryal of the truth or falſeneſs of grace by the duties we daily perform in Religion. And certainly they alſo have the uſe and efficacy of fire, for this diſcovery, 1 Joh. 2. 4, 5. *He that ſaith I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments [is a liar] and the truth is not in him: but whoſo keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: and*

hereby know we that we are in him.

This is a *practical lye*; of which the Apostle speaks here, by which men deceive others for a while, and themselves for ever: a lye not *spoken*, but *done*; when a mans course of life contradicts his profession. The life of an Hypocrite is but one long or continued *lye*: he saith or professeth he knows God, but takes no care at all to obey him in the duties he commands: he either neglects them, or if he perform them, it is not as God requires: if they *draw nigh him with their lips, yet their heart is far from him*, Isa. 29. 13. *Thou art near in their mouth, but far from their reins*, Jer. 12. 2.

There are some that feel the influence & power of their Communion with the Lord in duties, going down to their very reins: & there are others whose lips and tongues only are toucht with Religion.

This is an age of light and much profession: men cannot now keep up a reputation in the sober & professing world, whilest they let down, and totally neglect the duties of Religion: but surely if men would be but just to themselves, their very performances of duty would tell them what their hearts are.

SECT. II.

FOr there among others these following particulars, that do very clearly difference the found from the unsound professour.

1. *First*,

1. *First*, The designs and true Levels and aims of mens hearts in duty will tell them what they are.

An Hypocrite aims Low, Hosea 7. 14. *They have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds; they assembled themselves for Corn and Wine, and they rebel against me.* It is not for Christ, and pardon, or mortification, and holiness; but for corn, and wine, thus they make a Market of Religion; all their ends in duty are either carnal, natural, or legal; it is either to accommodate their carnal ends, or satisfie and quiet their Consciences: and so their duties are performed as a *sin-offering* to God.

But an upright heart, hath very high, and pure aims in duty; *the desire of their soul is to God*, Isa. 26. 8. *their soul follows hard after God*, Psal. 63 8. *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I might dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to see the beauty of the Lord; and to enquire in his Temple*, Psal. 27. 4. These are the true *Eagles* that play at the *Sun*, and will not stoop to low and earthly objects. Alas! if the enjoyment of God be missed in a duty, it is not the greatest enlargments of gifts will satisfie: he comes back like a man that hath taken a long journey to meet his friend upon important business; and lost his labour; his friend was not there.

2. *Secondly*, The *engagements* of mens hearts to God in duties will tell them what they are. The *hypocrite* takes little heed to his heart, *Esa.* 29. 13. they are not afflicted really for the hardneſs, deadneſs, unbelief, and wanderings of their hearts in duty; as upright ones are: nor do they engage their hearts, and labour to get them up with God in duty as his people do. *I have intreated thy favour with my whole heart*, ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 119. 58. they are not pleaſed in duty till they feel their hearts ſtand towards God like a bow in its full bent. I ſay not it is alwayes ſo with them, what would they give that it might be ſo! but ſurely if their ſouls in duty be empty of God, they are filled with trouble and ſorrow.

3 *Thirdly*, The Conſcience men make of *ſecret* as well as of *publick* duties, will tell them what their hearts and graces are, true or falſe. A vain Profeſſour is curious in the former, and either *negligent*, or at beſt *formal* in the latter: for he finds no inducement of honour, applauſe, or oſtentation of gifts externally moving him to them: nor hath he any experience of the ſweetneſs & benefit of ſuch duties internally to allure and engage his ſoul to them.

The *Hypocrite* therefore is not for the *cloſet*, but the *Synagogue*, *Matth.* 6. 5, 6. not but that education, example, or the impulſe of conſcience

conscience may sometimes drive him thither; but it is not his daily delight to be there; his meat and drink to retire from the clamour of the world to enjoy God in secret. 'Tis the observation of their duties is the great inducement to these men to perform them; and verily saith our Lord, *ver.* 2. *they have their reward*, ἀπέχουσι they have it away; or they have carryed off all the benefit and advantage that ever they shall have by Religion. Much good do them with their applause and honour, let them make much of that aery reward, for it's all that ever they shall have.

But now for a soul truly gracious, he cannot long subsist without secret prayer. 'Tis true, there is not always an equal freedom and delight, a like enlargement and comfort in those retirements: but yet he cannot be without them: he finds the want of his *secret*, in his *publick duties*: if he and his God have not met in secret, and had some Communion in the *morning*, he sensibly finds it in the deadness and unprofitableness of his heart and life all the *day* after.

4. *Fourthly*, The *spirituality* of our *duties* tryes the *sincerity* of our *graces*: an unregenerate heart is *carnal*, whilest engaged in duties that are *spiritual*. Some men deceive themselves in thinking they are spiritual men, because their imployment and calling

ling is about ſpiritual things, *Hoſea* 9. 7. this indeed gives them the *denomination*, but not the *frame* of *ſpiritual men*: and others judge themſelves ſpiritual perſons, becauſe they frequently perform and attend upon ſpiritual duties: but alas the heart and ſtate may be carnal notwithſtanding all this. O my friends, it is not enough that the *object* of your duties is ſpiritual, that they reſpect an holy God; nor that the *matter* be ſpiritual, that you be converſant about holy things; but the *frame* of your heart muſt be ſpiritual, an heavenly temper of ſoul is neceſſary, and what are the moſt heavenly duties without it?

The *end* and *deſign* you aim at muſt be ſpiritual, the enjoyment of God, and a growing conformity to him in holineſs; elſe multiply duties as the ſand on the ſea ſhore, & they all will not amount to one evidence of your ſincerity. *God is my witneſs whom I ſerve with my ſpirit*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 1. 9. he ſeems to appeal to God in this matter. I ſerve God in my ſpirit, and God knows that I do ſo. I dare appeal to him that it is ſo: he knows that my heart is with him, or would be with him in my duties: the armes of my faith do either ſenſibly graſp, or are ſtretched out towards him in my duties. O how little ſavour do gracious hearts find in the moſt excellent duties, if

God

God and their souls do not sensibly meet in them!

Certainly Reader, There is a time when God comes nigh to men in duty, when he deals familiarly with men, and sensibly fills their souls with unusual powers and delights. The near approaches of God to their souls are felt by them, (for souls have their senses as well as bodies;) and now are their minds abstracted and marvellously refined from all that is material and earthly, and swallowed up in spiritual excellencies and glories.

These are the real *prelibations* or foretastes of glory, which no man can by words make another to understand, as he himself doth that feels them.

These seasons I confess do but rarely occur to the best of Christians, nor continue long when they do: alas! this wine is too strong for such weak bottles as we are. *Hold Lord* (said an holy man once) *it is enough thy poor creature is a clay vessel, and can hold no more:* this is that *Joy unspeakable and full of glory*, which is mentioned, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7, 8. something that words cannot describe: these seasons are the *golden spots* of our lives, when we are admitted to these near and ineffable views and tastes of God: possibly some poor Christians can say but little to these things; their

Rara hora, brevis mora; sapit quidem suavissime, sed gustatur rarissime. Bernard.

their ſorrows are exerciſed in duties mor
than their Joys: they are endeavouring t
mount, but the ſtone hangs at the heel: the
eſſay, but cannot riſe to that height tha
others do, who are got up by their labou
ing faith into the upper Region, and ther
diſplay their wings and ſing in the Sun
beams: but though they cannot reach th
height, yet have they no ſatisfaction in du
ties wherein there is no intercourſe betwi
God and their ſouls.

That which contents another, will no
content a Chriſtian: if the *King* be abſen
men will bow to the empty *chair*; but
God be abſent, an empty duty gives no ſa
tisfaction to a gracious ſpirit. The poore
Chriſtian is found panting after God by ſin
cere deſires, and labouring to get up tha
dead and vain heart to God in duty; though
alas! it's many times but the rolling of th
returning ſtone againſt the hill: yet he ne
ver expects advantage by that duty where
in the ſpirit of God is not; nor doth he ex
pect the ſpirit of God ſhould be, where hi
own ſpirit is not.

5. *Fifthly*, *Aſſiduity* and *conſtancy* in dutie
of Religion makes a notable diſcovery o
the ſoundneſs or rottenneſs of mens heart
The *Hypocrite* may ſhew ſome zeal and for
wardneſs in duties for a time, but he will
fade and give out at length: *Job* 27. 10.
Will

Will he delight himself in the Almighty? will he always call upon God? No, he will not. If his motions in Religion were *natural*, they would be constant; but they are *artificial* & he is moved by external inducements; & so must needs be off and on: he prays himself weary of praying, and hears himself weary of hearing: his heart is not delighted in his duties, and therefore his duties must needs grow stale and dry to him after a while. There be three seasons in which the zeal of an *Hypocrite* may be inflamed in duties.

First, When some iminent danger threatens him; some smart rod of God is shaked over him: *when he slew them, then they sought him, and returned and enquired early after God*, Psal. 78. 34. O the goodly words they give, the fair promises they make; and yet all the while *they do but flatter him with their lips, and lye unto him with their tongues*, ver. 36, 37. For let but that danger pass over, and the heavens clear up again, and he will restrain prayer, and return to his old course again.

Secondly, When the times Countenance and favour Religion, and the wind is in his back: O what a zeal will he have for God! So in the stony ground, *Matth.* 13. 5. the seed sprung up and flourished till the sun of persecution arose, and then it faded away; for it had no depth of earth: no deep

solid

ſolid inward work or principle of grace t
maintain it.

Thirdly, When ſelf-ends and deſigns a
accommodated & promoted by theſe thing
this was the caſe of *Jehu*, 2 Kings 1
16. *come ſee my zeal*, for what? for a ba
ſelf-intereſt, not for God: how fervent
will ſome men pray, preach, and profe
whileſt they ſenſibly feel the incomes & pr
fit of theſe duties to their fleſh: whileſt the
are admired and applauded!

Theſe external incentives will put an hy
pocrite into an hot fit of zeal, but then as
is with a man whoſe colours are raiſed b
the heat of the fire, and not by the health
fulneſs of a good conſtitution; it ſoon fade
and falls again.

But bleſſed be God it is not ſo with al
The man whoſe heart is upright with hi
God, will *keep judgment, and do righteouſne*
at all times, Pſal. 106. 3. whether danger
threaten or no; whether times favour Reli
gion no no; whether his earthly intereſt b
promoted by it or no; he will be holy ſtill: h
will not part with his duties when they ar
ſtript naked of thoſe external advantages
as the *addition* of theſe things to Religion di
not at firſt engage him, ſo the *ſubſtraction* o
them, cannot diſengage him.

If his duty become his *reproach*, yet *Moſe*
will not forſake it: *Heb.* 11. 26. If he loſ
his

s company, and be left alone, yet *Paul* will ot flinch from his duty, 2 *Tim.* 4. 16. if azard surround duty on every side, yet *Da-l*, will not quit it, *Dan.* 6. 10. for they con-dered these things at first, and counted the st, they still find Religion is rich enough pay the cost of all that they can lose or fer for its sake; yea, and that with an ndred-fold reward, now in this life. They ver had other design in engaging in Re-gious duties, but to help them to heaven, d if they recover heaven at last; whether e way to it prove better, or worse; they ve their design, and ends: and therefore ey will be stedfast, alwayes abounding in work of the Lord, as knowing their our is not in vain in the Lord, 1 *Cor.* *ult.*

6. *Sixthly*, The *humility* and self-denyal our hearts in duties will try what they for their integrity and sincerity towards d. Doth a man boast his own excellencies prayer as the Pharisee did, *Luke* 18. 10, *God I thank thee I am not as other men*: ich he speaks not in an humble acknow-gement of the grace of God which dif-ences man from man; but in a proud entation of his own excellencies? Doth man make his duties his *Saviour*, and trust hem in a vain confidence of their worth dignity? *Luke* 18. 9. Surely his heart

which

which is thus lifted up within him, is n
upright, *Hab.* 2. 4. But if the heart be u
right indeed, it will expreſs its humility,
in all other things, ſo eſpecially in its dut
wherein it approaches the great and h
God.

Firſt, It will manifeſt its humility in th
awful and reverential apprehenſions it h
of God, as *Abraham* did, *Gen.* 18. 27. *A*
now I that am but duſt and aſhes (ſaith
have taken upon me to ſpeak unto God. T
humility of *Abrahams* ſpirit is in ſome mea
to be found in all *Abrahams* Children.

Secondly, In thoſe low and vile thou
they have of themſelves, and their religi
performances; thus that poor penit
Luke 7. 38. ſtood behind Chriſt weepi
yet the dogs eat the crumbs, ſaith anot
Mark 7. 28. I am more brutiſh than
man, ſaith a third, *Prov.* 30. 7. I abhor
ſelf in duſt and aſhes, ſaith a fourth, *Jo*
6. and as little eſteem they have for t
performances, *Eſa.* 64. 6. *all our righteouſ*
are as filthy rags. I deny not but the
pride and vanity in the moſt upright o
but what place ſoever it finds in their
verſes with men, it finds little room in t
converſes with God; or if it do, they k
it, and themſelves for it.

Thirdly, But eſpecially their humilit
duty is diſcovered in renouncing all t
do

duties in point of dependance, and relying entirely upon Christ for righteousness, and acceptance: they have special regard to duties in point of *obedience*, but none at all in point of *Relyance*.

7. *Seventhly*, The *Communion* and *intercourse* which is betwixt God and men in duties, notably discovers what their persons and graces are. And it must needs do so, because what communion soever the *hypocrite* hath with duties, or with *Saints* in duties; to be sure he hath none with God.

None can *come nigh* to God in duty, but those that are *made nigh* by reconciliation: all special Communion with Christ, is found- in real union with Christ: but *The wicked are estranged from the womb*, Psal. 58. 3.

But now there is real communion betwixt God and his people in duties. Truly our fellowship, κοινωνία, our Communion is with the Father and Son, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. God pours forth of his spirit upon them, and they pour forth their hearts to God. It is sensibly manifest to them when the Lord comes nigh to their souls in duty, and as sensible they are of his retreats and withdrawments from their souls, *Cant.* 3. 1, 4. They find their hearts like the *Heliotrope*, open and shut according to the accesses and recesses of the divine presence. They that never felt any thing of this nature, may call it a fancy, but

but the Lords people are abundantly ſatisfi-
ed of the reality thereof.

Their very Countenance is altered by it
1 *Sam.* 1. 18. the ſad and cloudy counte-
nance of *Hannah*, cleared up, there was fai
weather in her very face, aſſoon as ſhe knew
ſhe had audience and acceptance with he
God. I know all communion with Go
doth not conſiſt in joyes and Comforts, the
is as real communion with God in the mo
tifying and humbling influences of his ſpir
upon men, as in the cheering and refreſhin
influences thereof. I know alſo there is
great diverſity in the degrees and meaſur
thereof. It is not alike in all Chriſtians, n
with the ſame Chriſtian at all times: b
that real Chriſtians have true and real Co
munion with God in their duties, is a tru
as manifeſt in ſpiritual ſenſe and expe
ence of the Saints, as their Communion
one with another.

8. *Eighth*, *Growth* and improvement
grace in duties notably differences the ſoun
and unſound heart. All the duties in t
world will never make an hypocrite mo
holy, humble, or heavenly than he is: b
as the watering of a dry ſtick will ſoon
rot it, than make it flouriſhing and fruitf
What was *Judas* the better for all thoſe h
venly ſermons, prayers, and diſcourſes
Chriſt which he heard? and what

y soul be the better for all the duties thou erformest weekly and daily if thy heart be nsound? It's plain from *Joh.* 15. 4. there ust be an implantation into Christ, before here can be an improvement in fruitful o-edience. And it is as plain from 1 *John* . 14. that the virtues of the ordinances must emain, the efficacy and powers that we ometimes feel under them, must abide and emain in the heart afterwards; or we can-ot grow, and be made fruitful by them.

But the false professour is neither rooted n Christ by union with him, nor doth or in retain the vertue of ordinances within im: but like one that views his face in a lass, quickly forgets what manner of man e was: his head indeed may grow, his know-edge may increase, but he hath a dead nd withered heart.

But as the Saints have real Communion with God in duties, so they do make im-provements answerable thereunto: there is most certainly a ripening of their graces that way; a changing or gradual transformation rom glory to glory; a springing up to that ull stature of the man in Christ. *They that re planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish n the Courts of our God,* Psal. 92. 13, 14. There is pure and sincere milk in the breasts of ordinances: a believer sucks the very breasts of Christ in his duties, and doth grow thereby,

1 *Pet.* 2. 2. they do grow more and mor judicious, experienced, humble, mortified and heavenly, by converſing with the Lor ſo frequently in his appointments.

There is I confeſs a more diſcernabl growth and ripening in ſome Chriſtians, tha in others: the faith of ſome groweth ex ceedingly, 2 *Theſſ.* 1. 3. others more ſlowly *Heb.* 5. 12. but yet there are improvement of grace in all upright ones: habits are mor deeply radicated, or fruits of obedience mor increaſed.

Obj. *If any upright ſoul be ſtumbled at thi not being able to diſcern the increaſe of h graces after all his duties.*

Sol. Let ſuch conſider the growth o grace is diſcerned as the growth of plant is, which we perceive rather *Creviſſe, quam creſcere*: to have grown, than to grow compare time paſt and preſent, and yo may ſee it: but uſually our eager deſires af ter more, make us over look what we hav as nothing.

9. *Nimbly*, The *aſſiſtances* and influence of the ſpirit in duties, ſhews us what we are no vital ſanctifying influences can fall upon carnal hearts in duties. The ſpirit helps no their infirmities, nor makes interceſſion for them with groanings which cannot be ut tered, as he doth for his own people: *Rom* 8. 26, 27. they have his aſſiſtances in th

way

y of common *gifts*, but not in the way special *grace*: he may enable them to ach *judiciously*, not *experimentally*: to pray erly and *neatly*, not *feelingly*, believingly, broken heartedly: *for as many as are by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God*, m. 8. 14. he never so assists, but where he h first sanctified. Carnal men furnish the erials of their duties out of the strength heir parts; a strong *memory*, a good *in-tion* are the fountains whence they draw. But it is otherwise with souls truly gra-us: they have ordinarily a three fold as-ance from the spirit in reference to their ies.

First, Before duties, *exciting* them to it; king them feel their need of it: like the of an empty stomach: *Psal.* 27. 8. *Thou st, Seek my face: my heart answered, Thy Lord will I seek.*

Secondly, In their duties, furnishing both tter and affection; as in that text lately ed, *Rom.* 8. 26. guiding them not only *at* to ask, but *how* to ask.

Thirdly, after their duties, helping them only to suppress the pride and vanity of ir spirits, but also to wait on God for accomplishment of their desires.

Now though all these things wherein the erity of our hearts is tryed in duties, be nd in great variety (as to degrees) among Saints,

Saints, yet they are mysteries unknown experience to other men.

CHAP. VIII.

Opening the Tryals of sincerity and hypocrisie sufferings upon the account of Religion.

SECT. I. WE are now arrived at last tryal of grace propo ded, *viz.* by sufferings for Religion.

Thousands of Hypocrites embarque th selves in the profession of Religion Calm; but if the wind riseth, and the rageth, and they see Religion will not tr port them safely to the *Cape* of their ear hopes and expectations; they desire to landed again aftoon as may be, for they ver intended to ride out a storm for Chr So you find *Matth.* 13. 20, 21. *He dur for a while, but when tribulation or persecu ariseth because of the word, by & by he is offen*

But yet it is not every Tryal by sufferi that seperates gold from dross, and there my business will be to shew,

1. *First*, When the fire of sufferings persecution is hot and vehement enough separate them.

2. *Secondly*, Why it must needs disc hypocrisie when it is at that height.

3. Thirdly, What advantages sin Grace hath to endure that severe and fi tryal.

SE

SECT. II.

NOw the fire of perſecution or ſufferings for Religion may be judged intenſe and high enough to ſeparate gold and droſs.

First, When Religion expoſes us to eminent hazard of our deepeſt and deareſt intereſts in this world. Such are our liberties, eſtates, and lives: now 'tis a fierce and fiery tryal indeed. Sometimes it expoſes the liberties of its profeſſours, *Revel.* 2. 10. *The devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon*: ſometimes their eſtates, *Heb.* 10. 34. *ye took joyfully the ſpoiling of your goods*; and ſometimes their lives, *Heb.* 11. 37. *They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, they were ſlain with the ſword.* Whileſt it goes no higher than ſome ſmall inconveniencies of life, reputation or meaſe of honour will hold a falſe heart; but when it comes to this, few will be found able to endure it, but thoſe that expect to have no more by Religion but their ſouls, and account themſelves in good caſe if they can but ſave them, with the loſs of all that is dear to them in this world.

Here the falſe heart boggles, here it uſually jades and faulters.

Secondly, The fiery Tryal is then high, when there remains no viſible hopes of deliverance or outward incouragements to ſenſe,

that the *scene*, will alter: when *we see not our signs, there is no more any prophet; nor any that can tell us how long*, as the case with the *Church* was in *Psal.* 74. 9. then their hands hang down, and their hearts faint: nor is it to be wondred at, when the length of trouble prove so sore a temptation even to the upright, to put forth their hands to iniquity, as it is *Psal.* 125. 3. if such a temptation shake such men as build on the rock, it must quite overturn those whose foundation is but sand.

Thirdly, When a false professour is engaged alone in sufferings, and is singled out from the herd as a *deer* to be run down: now it's a thousand to one but he quits Religion to save himself: good company will encourage a faint-hearted *traveller* to jogg on a great way: but if he be forsaken by all, as *Paul* was, no man to stand by him if left alone, as *Elijah* was, what can encourage him to hold out?

Indeed if they had the same invisible supports those good men had, that the Lord was with them, that would keep them stead but wanting that encouragement from within, and all shrinking away from without they quickly tyre downright.

Fourthly, When near relations and intimates oppose and tempt us. The Prophet speaks of a time *when a mans enemies*

all be the men of his own houſe, it may be he wife of his boſome, *Mica.* 7. 5, 6. O what a tryal is that which Chriſt mentions *Luke* 14. 26. when we muſt hate Father and Mother, Wife and Children, or quit laim to Chriſt and heaven! This is hard ork indeed.

How hard did that truly noble and renowned *Galeacius Caracciolus* find this! O hat a conflict found he in his bowels! Now hriſt and our deareſt intereſt come to meet e two men upon a narrow bridge, if one forward, the other muſt go back, and ow the predominant intereſt can no longbe concealed.

Fifthly, When powerful temptations are ixed with cruel ſufferings, when we are ongly tempted, as well as cruelly perſecud; this blows up the fire to a vehement ight. This was the tryal of thoſe precis primitive believers, *Heb.* 11. 35, 37. *They re ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, they were pted*: here was life, liberty and preferent ſet upon one hand; and death in the ſt formidable ſhape upon the other. This not but be a great tryal to any: but eſcially when a cruel death, & tender temmeet; then the tryal goes high indeed.

SECT. III.

AND that ſuch ſufferings as theſe will diſcover the falſeneſs and rottenneſs

of mens hearts cannot be doubted, if yo
conſider that this is the fire deſigned b
God for this very uſe and purpoſe to ſep
rate the *gold* from the *droſs*, ſo you will fin
it, 1. *Pet.* 4. 12. *Beloved think it n
ſtrange concerning the fiery tyral, which is
try you*, (*i. e.*) the very deſign and aim
providence in permitting and ordering the
is to try you. The deſign of *Satan* is to
ſtroy you, but Gods deſign is to *try* you. U
on this account you find the hour of per
cution (in a ſuitable notion) call'd *the h
of temptation*, or probation, *Rev.* 3. 10.
then profeſſours are ſifted to the very bra
ſearched to the very bottom principles. T
is *the day that burns as an Oven, in which
the proud, and all that do wickedly ſhall be as ſt
ble*, Mal. 4. 1. for,

1. *Firſt*, In that day the predominant
tereſt muſt appear, and be diſcovered: it c
be concealed no longer, *no man can ſer
two maſters*, ſaith Chriſt, *Luke* 16. 13. a m
may ſerve many maſters, if they all comma
the ſame things, or things ſubordinate
each other; but he cannot ſerve two ma
ers if their Commands claſh and interf
with each other; and ſuch are the co
mands of Chriſt and the fleſh in a ſuff
ing hour: *Chriſt* ſaith, *be thou faithful to
death*; the *fleſh* ſaith, *ſpare thy ſelf*; and ſee
the comforts of life. *Chriſt* ſaith, He
lo

veth Father, or Mother, Wife or Children, nds or Inheritances more than me, is not orthy of me. *Flesh* saith, he that will grieve d break the hearts of such dear relations, d forsake when he might keep such earth- accommodations, is not worthy of them. Thus the two interests come in full oppo- ion: and now have but patience to wait little, and you shall discern which is pre- minant. A *dog* follows two men while they th walk one way; and you know not hich of the two is his master; stay but a little l their path parts, & then you shall quick- see who is his master. So is it in this case. 2. *Secondly*, In that day sensible supports il, and all a mans relief comes in by the re and immediate actings of faith; and ere it not for those reliefs, his heart would on faint and dye away under discourage- ents, 2. Cor. 4. 17, 18. *We faint not, whilst look not at the things which are seen, for they temporal, but at the things which are not seen, they are External*: *q. d.* longer than we ep our eye intently fixed upon the invisi- e and eternal things in the coming world; e feel our selves, fainting, and dying away nder the troubles & afflictions of this world. *had fainted* (saith *David*) *if I had not believed.* ow then suppose ye shall the *Hypocrite* live such a time, who hath no faith to support m? no relief but what comes in through senses?

3. *Thirdly*, In that day all meer Notion and Speculations about Religion vaniſh, an nothing relieves and ſatisfies the ſufferin ſoul, but what it really believes, and what i hath ſatisfying proof and experience of i *himſelf*. There are a great many pret pleaſing notions with which our minds a entertained with ſome delight in times peace, which can do us no ſervice at all the day of trouble: and for our ſpeculati unpracticable knowledge of the greate truths in Religion, as little ſervice is to be ex pected from them. Except we have bett evidence and ſecurity about them, we ſha be loth to venture all upon the credit of them that's a very conſiderable paſſage to this pur poſe in *Heb.* 10. 34. *Ye took joyfully the ſpoi ing of your goods, [knowing in your ſelves.] th ye have in heaven a better and more enduri ſubſtance*: this *knowing in our ſelves* is by in ward ſenſible experience, taſte, and feelin which is abundantly ſatisfying to the ſoul and ſtands oppoſed to all that tradition knowledge we receive from others; whic as it leaves the mind fluctuating, ſo the hea alſo dead and comfortleſs.

4. *Fourthly*, In that day the root & found tion of a mans faith and hope is tryed, an then they that have built upon the ſand mu needs fail: for every thing is as its found tion is: principles are to us, what a root

to a tree; or a foundation to an houſe, a flaw, or grand defect there ruines all: this we find to be the very ſcope of thoſe two famous parables, *Luke* 14. 25. and *Matth.* 13. 21. leſſer troubles ſhake but the branches, but theſe try the root: if nothing be found there but ſelf ends, the force of education, the influence of examples; ſurely when the winds riſe high, and beat upon it, they will quickly lay the loftieſt profeſſour even with the ground.

And thus you ſee what a *Criſis* an hour of temptation, the ſuffering hour is, & what diſcoveries of *Hypocriſie* it muſt needs make; for now the *Hypocrite* like *Orpha* will forſake Religion, but ſincerity will make the ſoul cleave to it, as *Ruth* did to *Naomi*.

SECT. IV.

WHat advantages ſincerity gives the ſoul for its eſtabliſhment & perſeverance in ſuffering times, I ſhall briefly account for in the following particulars.

1. *Firſt*, Sincere godlineſs dethrones that *Idol* the love of this world, in all true Chriſtians; and this is it that makes men ſhrink and flinch from Chriſt in a day of ſuffering. I do not deny but even believers themſelves love the world too much, but they love it not as their chief good; it is not their portion or happineſs, if any man ſo love

the world, *the love of the Father is not in him*, 1 Joh. 2. 15. How much ſoever a ſincere Chriſtian loves the world, yet ſtill it is in ſubordination to the love of God, *Joh.* 21. 15. Sincerity can conſiſt with no other love of the world; it will not ſuffer ſuch a curſed plant to grow under its ſhadow.

Now, what is it but this inordinate ſupream love of the Creature that makes men forſake Chriſt in time of temptation? this was the ruine of that young man, Matth. 19 22. *he went away ſorrowful, for he had great poſſeſſions.* This was the overthrow of *Demas*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. *he hath forſaken me* (ſaith the *Apoſtle*) *having loved this preſent world*: the love of this world like ſap in green wood will not ſuffer you to burn for Chriſt; get but the heart mortified to the creature, by a diſcovery of better things in heaven; and it will eſtabliſh and fix your ſpirits, that it ſhall not be in the power of creatures to ſhake you off from Chriſt your foundation.

2. *Secondly*, Sincerity knits the ſoul to Chriſt and union with him ſecures us in the great tryals: *munimur quartenus unimur.* The Hypocrite having no union with Chriſt, can have no communion with him; nor communications of grace from him; and ſo that little ſtock of his own being quickly ſpent, (I mean natural courage & reſolution,

and

and no incomes from Christ, he must needs give up in a short time; but it is with a believer in a day of trouble, as it is with a *Garison* besieged by Land, but free and open to the Sea; whence fresh supplies are daily sent in to relieve it: see 2 *Cor.* 1. 5. *as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ*: fresh aides and daily supplyes proportionable to our expences, and decays of strength. So *Col.* 1. 11. *Strengthned with all might in the inner man, according to his glorious power; unto all patience, and long-suffering with joyfulness*: and this is the believers great advantage by his union with Christ in a day of tryal.

3. *Thirdly*, As sincerity unites the soul with Christ, so it sets the heart upon heaven and things eternal, *Col.* 3. 1, *&c.* surely nothing is more conducive to our stability than this, in the hour of temptation.

This is the most effectual preservative from temptations upon the right hand, and upon the left. *Moses* could cast a Kingdom at his heels, despise the riches, pleasures and honours of *Egypt*, whilst his eye was fixed upon him that is invisible; and had respect to the recompence of reward, *Heb.* 11. 24, 25, 26. And it was a brave reply of the *Forty Martyrs* to *Valence* the *Emperour*, tempting them with the preferments and honours of the world; *Why offer you these trifles to us,*

when you know the whole world is contemned by us? And for temptations on the left hand, how little can they move that soul, who realizes the glory of the approaching world, & sees the afflictions & sufferings of this world preparing him for, and hastening him to the enjoyment of it; temptations meet but with cold entertainment from such souls.

4. *Fourthly*, Sincerity drives but one design, and that is to please and enjoy God; and what can more establish and fix the soul in the hour of temptations than this? The reason why the Hypocrite is unstable in all his ways, is given us by the Apostle *James* 1. 8. he is a double minded man δίψυχος ἀνὴρ a man of two souls in one body; as a prophane wretch once boasted, that he had one soul for God, another for any thing: but all the designs of a gracious heart, are united in one: and so the intire stream of his affections runs strong.

'Tis base by ends & self-interests, that like a great many ditches cut out of the bank of a River, draw away the stream out of its proper Chanel, and make its waters fail: but if the heart be united for God as the expression is, *Psal.* 86. 11. then we may say of such a *Christian*, as was said of a young *Roman*, *quicquid vult, valdè vult*; what he doth, is done with all his might. And this was the ground of that saying, *liberet me Deus ab homine*

mine unius tantùm negotii: a man of one only design puts to all his ſtrength to carry it: nothing can ſtand before him.

5. *Fifthly*, Sincerity brings a mans will into ſubjection to the will of God; and this being done, the greateſt danger and difficulty is over with ſuch a man. This is that holy oyl, which makes the wheels of the ſoul run nimbly even in difficult paths of obedience, *non tardat uncta rota*. Let but a man be once brought to that, *The will of the Lord be done*; as it is, *Acts* 21. 13. to ſee the higheſt reaſon of cheerful obedience in the holy, juſt and good will of God; and then the difficulty is over: he can ſuffer *quietly*, what men inflict *unjuſtly*.

6. *Sixthly*, Sincerity takes its meaſures of preſent things by the rules of faith, and eternity: it goes not by the ſame reckoning & account that others do, who judge of things by ſenſe, and the reſpects they have to the preſent world: 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. *We look not at the things that are ſeen, but at the things that are not ſeen*; and this is there given as the reaſon of his not fainting under preſent difficulties: ſo Rom. 8. 18. *I reckon that the ſufferings of the preſent time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us*: he will not allow himſelf to undervalue eternal glory by once mentioning preſent ſufferings, in a way of bemoaning himſelf

himſelf for them: a ſteady eye upon the other world makes us more than Conquerours over the troubles of this world.

7. *Seventhly*, To conclude, Sincerity alone hath all the heavenly aids and aſſiſtances to ſtability and perſeverance in ſuffering times. Upright ones (and ſuch only) have Chriſts *interceſſion* in heaven for them, *Rom.* 8. 34. The ſpirits *conſolation* in all their troubles, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. the ſpirit of glory & of God reſteth on them: the beneficial *miniſtry of Angels*, who are ſent forth upon their account, *Heb.* 1. 14. *A ſtock of Prayers* going for them all the world over, *Eph.* 6. 18. Multitudes of *precious promiſes* in the Scriptures, for every line, word & ſyllable of which the faithfulneſs of God ſtands engaged: ſo that it's impoſſible ſuch gold can periſh in the fire.

And thus of the ſeveral ways by which grace is here tryed.

CHAP. IX.

Opening the deſigns and ends of God in bringing of the profeſſours of Religion iuto ſuch various Tryals of their graces in this world.

SECT. 1. THeſe are ſome of the ways & methods in which God brings his Gold to the Touchſtone, and to the fire, even in this world; before the awful and ſolemn

solemn Tryal they must come to in the final Judgment. And if we desire to be satisfied what the design and end of God in making such probations of his people is,

We must conclude in the general, he certainly designs his own glory, and his peoples advantage, and profit in them. If he suffer them to be tryed by reproaches, *happy are they, the spirit of God and glory resteth on them*; there's their *profit*, and though his name be evil spoken of, yet in the meekness of their spirits, *he is glorified*, as it is, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. *If the scourge slay suddenly, he laugheth at the tryal of the innocent*, Job 9. 23. not at their afflictions, but at the effects and blessed issues and results of them: not that it gives them *pain*, but that it gives him *glory*: upon this account the *Apostle* bids us count it all Joy when we fall into divers temptations or tryals: and still the more tryals the more joy; for thereby God will produce such effects, as are more precious than gold that perisheth, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. O who can value the comfort that is tasted by the soul upon the Tryal and discovery of its sincerity! when after some sore temptation, wherein God hath helped us to maintain our integrity; or after some close pinching affliction, wherein we have discovered in our selves a sweet resignation to, and contentment in the will of God; an heart cleaving to the Lord, purged

ged and made more spiritual under the rod; we can turn to the Lord, and appeal to him as the Prophet did, *Jer.* 12. 3. / *But thou O Lord knowest me, thou hast seen me, and tryed mine heart towards thee.*

I say who can duly value such an advantage, who would exchange such a comfort for all the gold and silver in the world! how many tryals soever God brings his people under, to be sure neither his own glory, nor their interest shall suffer any damage by them.

SECT. II.

BUt more particularly, let us bring our thoughts close to the matter before us; and we shall find many great advantages and benefits rising out of these Tryals of sincerity; for,

1. *First*, Hereby Hypocrisie is unmasked and discovered; The vizard is pluckt off from the false professour, and his true natural face and complexion shewn to the world; and in this there is a great deal of good.

Object. *Good, you will say, where lyes it? all the world sees the mischief and sad effects of it; many are stumbled, many are hardned by it, woe to the world because of offences,* Matth. 16. 7.

Sol. True, some are prejudiced and hardened by it, so as never to have good thoughts of the wayes and people of God more; that's sad indeed, however therein God

God accompliſhes his word, and executeth his decree. And though theſe periſh; yet

Firſt, Others are warned, awakened, and ſet a ſearching their own hearts more narrowly than ever; and this is good: 1 *Cor.* 10. 11, 12. now theſe were our examples, *wherefore let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall.*

Secondly, Hereby ſin is aſhamed, and it is good when ſin that hath expoſed men to ſo much ſhame, ſhall be it ſelf expoſed to ſhame. This is the juſt reward of ſin, *Jer.* 13. 25, 26. *This is thy lot, the portion of thy meaſures from me, ſaith the Lord; becauſe thou haſt forgotten me, and truſted in falſhood, therefore will I diſcover thy skirts upon thy face that thy ſhame may appear.*

The turning up the skirt is a modeſt expreſſion of expoſing a perſon to the greateſt ſhame: in the day of Tryal, God by diſcovering hypocriſie ſhames the hypocrite: and ſurely many ſuch diſcoveries are made of men at this day; we may ſee ſin that lurked cloſe in the heart before, now laid open before all *Iſrael* and before the Sun.

Thirdly, Hereby the poor ſelf-couzening hypocrite hath the greateſt opportunity and advantage that ever was before him in all his life, to recover himſelf out of the ſnare of the Devil: now all his pretences are gone: now that which like a ſhield was advanced againſt

againſt the arrows of reproof and conviction is gone: now a poor creature ſtands naked and ſtript out of all his pleas as a fair and open mark to the word, and his own conſcience; and happy will it be for him if now the Lord make conviction to enter point-blank into his ſoul: all theſe are bleſſed effects of the diſcovery of Hypocriſie.

2. *Secondly*, By theſe tryals integrity is cleared up, and the doubts and fears of many upright and holly ones allayed and quieted reſolved and ſatisfied.

O what would many a poor Chriſtian give for ſatisfaction in that great point of ſincerity! how many tears have been ſhed to God in ſecret upon that account? how many hours have been ſpent in examination of his own heart about it, and ſtill jealouſies and fears hang upon his heart? he doubts what he may prove at laſt: Well, faith God, let his ſincerity then come to the teſt kindle the fire and caſt in my gold. Tryals are the high way to aſſurance: let my child ſee that he loves me more than theſe, that his heart is upright with me. I will try him by proſperity and by adverſity; by perſecutions and temptations; and he ſhall ſee his heart is better than he ſuſpects it to be. This ſhall be the day of reſolution to his fears and doubts.

The Apoſtle ſpeaking of Hereſies, 1 *Cor.*

1. 7, 9. puts a neceſſity upon them. *There muſt be Hereſies* (ſaith he) *that they which are approved may be made manifeſt.* The ſame neceſſity there is (and for the ſame end) of all other tryals of grace, that the lovely beautiful ſweet face of ſincerity may be opened ſometimes to the world to enamour them, and to the ſoul in whom it is, to ſatisfie it that it doth not perſonate a Chriſtian, but lives the very life of a Chriſtian, and hath the very ſpirit and principles of a Chriſtian in him.

3. *Thirdly*, By theſe tryals pride and ſelf-confidence is deſtroyed and mortified in the ſaints, as much as by any thing in the world: we never ſee what poor weak creatures we are, till we come to the tryal. It's ſaid, *Deut.* 8. 2. God led *Iſrael* through the deſart to prove them and to humble them: when we are *proved*, then we are *humbled*. Thoſe that never reckon their graces before the tryal, ſee they muſt come to another account, & take new meaſures of themſelves after they have been upon tryal.

Ah! little did I think, ſaith one, that I had ſo much love for the world, and ſo little for God, till afflictions tryed it. I could not have believed that ever the creature had got ſo deep into my heart, till providence either threatned or made a ſeparation, and then I found it. I thought I had been rich in faith, till ſuch a danger befel me; or ſuch a

want

want began to pinch hard; and then I saw how unable I was to trust God for protection, or provision. O it's a good thing that our hearts be kept humble and lowly, how rich soever they be in grace.

4. *Fourthly*, By tryals grace is kept in exercise, and the gracious soul preserved from security and spiritual slothfulness: tryals are to grace what the estuations and continual agitations of the waters are to the sea: or what the racking of Wines from the Lees is to it: were it not for our frequent tryals and exercises, we should quickly settle upon the Lees; and our duties would be (as God complains of *Ephraim*) like sowre or dead drink, *Hos.* 4. 18. flat, and spiritless. *Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel; neither hath he gone into Captivity; therefore his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed*, Jer. 48. 11.

Much after that rate it would be with our hearts, did not the Lord frequently try and exercise them: let the best man be without some tryal or other but a few months, & you may find the want of it in his prayers and conferences quickly. O what a taint of formality will be found in them! and is it for the honour of God or profit of his people that it should be so? no, no, the Lord knows it is not; but how shall their spiri-

be reduced to the former zealous heavenly temper again; why, ſaith the Lord, they muſt into the Furnace again. *I will melt them and try them, for how ſhall I do for the daughter of my people!* Jer. 9. 7. I love them too well to loſe them for want of a rod: alas! if I ſhould ſuffer things to go on at this rate, what will become of them in a little time? what delight can I take in their duties? when the faith, fervour, humility, & holy ſeriouſneſs of their ſpirits is wanting in them? I will therefore *refine them as ſilver is refined, and try them as gold is tryed*; *and they ſhall call upon my name, and I will hear them*; *and I will ſay it is my people*; *and they ſhall ſay the Lord is my God*, Zech. 13. 9. and thus the Lord chides himſelf freind again with his people.

Thus he recovers them to their true temper, and thus his viſitations do preſerve their ſpirits: and when the Lord ſees theſe ſweet effects of his tryals upon them, it greatly pleaſeth him. O now ſaith God I like it. This providence hath done them good, this rod was well beſtowed, the letting looſe of this temptation or that corruption upon them, hath made them find their knees again, now I hear the voice of my child again.

Beloved, this is a bleſſed fruit and effect of our frequent tryals, and how ungrateful ſoever they are to fleſh and blood, that affects eaſe and is loth to be diſturbed; yet it is ne-

ceſſary

ceſſary to the preſervation of our ſpirits.

5. *Fiftbly*, By the tryal of our graces *Satan* is defeated, and his accuſations of the Saints found to be meer ſlanders. It is a very common thing with the *devil* and wicked men, to accuſe the people of God of Hypocriſie, and to tell the world they are not the men and women they are taken to be; and that if their inſide were but turned out by ſome through tryal, or deep ſearch, it would appear that Religion did not indeed live in their ſouls as they pretend; but that they only act a part, and perſonate heavenly and mortified perſons upon the publick ſtage of profeſſion.

Thus the Accuſer of the brethren ſuggeſts the Hypocriſie of *Job*, Cap. 2. 5. *put forth thine hand now and touch his bone and his fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy face. q. d.* Well might *Job* ſerve thee, whileſt thou haſt been ſo bountiful a maſter to him; he hath been well rewarded for all the ſervice he hath done thee; but if thou ſtop the current of his proſperity, thou ſhalt ſee how quickly he will ſtop the courſe of his duty: a few laſhes from thy hand, will make him curſe thee to thy face: but O what ſhame and diſappointment was it to that envious ſpirit, what a vindication of *Jobs* integrity, when under the greateſt tryals of his faith and patience, he ſtill held faſt his integrity, and ſhews himſelf as great a pattern of patience under the croſs, as he had

had been of piety in the days of his greateſt proſperity! Satan gets nothing by bringing forth the ſaints upon the ſtage, to be made a ſpectacle to angels & men, as it is, 1 *Cor.* 4. 9.

6. Sixthly and Laſtly, The frequent tryals of grace, exhibit a full and living Teſtimony againſt the Atheiſm of the world. Theſe prove beyond all words or arguments that Religion is no fancy, but the greateſt reality in the world: men would make Religion but a fancy, and the zeal of its profeſſours, but the intemperate heat of ſome crazy brains, overheated with a fond notion.

They that never felt the real influences of Religion upon their own ſouls, will not believe that others do feel them. Serious piety is become the ludicrous ſubject with which the wanton Wits of this Atheſtical world ſport themſelves. But behold the wiſdom and goodneſs of God exhibiting to the world the undeniable teſtimonies of the truth of Religion, as often as the ſincere profeſſour thereof are brought to the teſt by afflictions from the hand of God, or perſecutions from the hands of men. Loe *here is the faith and patience of their Saints*: here is the courage, meekneſs, and ſelf-denyal ſhining as gold in the fire: they have the real proofs of it before their eyes: inſtead of caſting them into hell, and convincing them by eternal fire, he is pleaſed to caſt his own people into the fire

of

of affliction, that they who scoff at them may be convinced at an easier and cheaper rate. It is no new thing to see the enemies of Religion brought over to embrace it, by the constancy and faithfulness of the Saints in their tryals & sufferings for it. God grant that the Atheism of this present generation do not occasion a more fiery tryal to the people of God in it, than they have yet suffered.

CHAP. X.

Shewing that grace only is to be reckoned sincere and real, which can endure those tryals which God appoints, or permits for the discovery of it.

SECT. I. BEfore I offer you the proofs & evidences of this truth, it will be necessary to prevent some mistakes that may be occasioned by misunderstanding of it.

Caution 1. And in the first place, we are not to think assurance of our sincerity impossible to be had in this life, because as long as we live here we are in a state of tryal; and how many tryals soever have been made upon us already, yet still there are more to come; and we know not what we shall prove in future tryals, though God hath kept us upright in former tryals; no, no, this is none of my meaning; nor doth such a conclusion necessarily follow this assertion:

for

for a Chriſtian that hath rightly cloſed with Chriſt at firſt, and been faithful in the duties of active and paſſive obedience hitherto, may be aſſured upon good grounds of a victory before he come to the fire of his remaining tryals. So was the Apoſtle, Rom. 8. 35, &c. *who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? nay in all theſe we are more than conquerours, through him that hath loved us:* here's an aſſured triumph before the Combate. So Job 23. 10. *but he knoweth the way that I take when he hath tryed me, I ſhall come forth as gold,* he appeals to God for the ſincerity of his heart, ſo far as he had hith rto gone in the way of Religion; and thence concludes that whatever tryals God ſhould bring him to for time to come, he ſhould come forth as gold, (*i. e.*) he ſhould not loſe one grain by the fire; and this confidence of a gracious ſoul, is built not only upon experience gained in former tryals, but upon faith in the *power, promiſes,* and *faithfulneſs* of God which are engaged for him in the Covenant of grace, to keep him in the greateſt dangers that befal him in this world.

He believes the power of God is able to make him ſtand, though he hath no power or might in himſelf to overcome the leaſt temptation, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. you are kept φρουρουμένους, (kept

(kept as with a garrison) by the power of God through faith unto salvation: when Christ hath once taken possession of the soul by his spirit, he fortifies it by his power as a garrison, that using the means, it be surprized or betrayed no more into the enemies hand, so as finally to be lost.

He builds this confidence also upon the *promises* of God, which are his security in all future dangers; and how are all the pages of the Bible bespangled with such promises as the firmament is with bright and glorious stars! such are these of the first magnitude. 1 *Cor.* 1. 8, 9. *Christ shall confirm you to the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ; God is faithful by whom ye are are called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord*: and no less satisfying and sweet is that, Jer. 32. 40. *And I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me*: and of the same nature is that also, John 10. 27, 28. *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

If there be any *Hypocrite* in *sheeps-cloathing* he hath no part nor lot in this promise; but it secures the whole flock of Christ, great and small, against all danger.

He also builds his assurance upon the faithfulness of God, which stands engaged to make good every line, word and syllable of his promises to his people: so we find it in 1 Cor. 10. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful; who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with every temptation make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it:* and 2 Thes. 3. 3. *but the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.*

Add to this the constant prevalent intercession of Christ in Heaven for his people in all their tryals, and then you will see a sincere Christian need not to deny himself the joy & comfort of his assurance upon the account and supposition of his future tryals.

SECT. II.

Caution 2. NOr do we here suppose in this assertion, that inherent grace in the saints hath a sufficiency of ability in it self to endure the greatest and severest tryals that can befal it in this world. It is certain that it shall be carryed safely through all, but not in its own strength and ability. That is a true observation of the learned Gerson: *perfectiones sibi relictæ, sunt ponderæ ad ruinam:* the most perfect creature left to it self will fall into ruine. This was exempli-

fied in the *Angels* that fell & in *Adam*, though in a perfect ſtate: divine preſervation is the prop which ſupports the beſt creatures from ruine. Grace it ſelf is but a creature, and therefore a dependent being: it is but a ſtream depends upon the ſupply of the fountain; if the fountain let not forth it ſelf, what becomes of the ſtream? That's a true and judicious obſervation of the learned Dr. *Ames*; *Perſeverantia fidelium, vel immutabilis eorum conditio ſecundum integram ejus rationem non provenit à principio intrinſeco ſolo, nec à ſolo extrinſeco; ſed partim ab intrinſeco, ex natura vitæ ſpiritualis à Chriſto fluentis: & partim ab extrinſeco, ex cuſtodia, protectione, & direction Dei:* Ameſii Coronis Art. 5. The perſeverance of believers, or the immutability of their condition, if we view the whole ground and reaſon of it, is not wholly from within nor wholly from without it ſelf: but partly from the nature of the ſpiritual life which flows from Chriſt into them; and partly from the keeping, protection and direction of God. That protection is always afforded to this life of grace, and this life of grace always needs that protection. The beſt of men are but men at beſt, as one ſpeaks: it was not *Peters* grace and reſolution that kept him, but Chriſts care of him and intercession for him, Luke 22. 32. *Be ſtrong in the Lord*, (ſaith the *Apoſtle*) *and in the power*

ou might, Ephes. 6. 10. *Without me* (saith *Christ*) *ou can do nothing*, John 15. 5.

Neither of these is that which I have before me to prove, but this is that which I aim at; That such seeming grace as was never yet brought to the tryal, nor will be able to bear the tryal when God shall bring it thereto; must not pass for current (as too frequently it doth) among us; such grace will neither comfort us now, nor save us hereafter: for,

SECT. III.

1. FIrst, Great numbers of persons in the professing world are deceived and destroyed by trusting to seeming and untried grace. This was the miserable condition of these *Laodicean professours* in the Text: they reckoned themselves rich, but were really poor, all is not gold that glisters; their gold (as they accounted it) was never tryed in the fire: if a mans whole estate lay in some precious stone, suppose a rich *Diamond*, how is he concerned to have it throughly tryed? to see whether it will bear a smart stroke with the hammer, or fly like a *Bristol* Diamond under it? All that you are worth lyes in the truth and sincerity of your grace; and till that be tryed you know not whether you be worth any thing or nothing.

Reader, There are two sad sights in the

world, which cannot but deeply affect every upright heart: one is to see so many thousands of rational and ingenious men in the *Romish Church* by an implicite faith in their guides, venturing their souls upon their bare word, never searching the Scriptures with their own eyes, but wholly trusting to the infallibility of the *Pope*, or a *Council* when in the mean time, they would fear to take their word for a sum of money without some farther security. It is amazing to behold the soul-destroying, easie credulity of these men: but this is a stroke of madness and spiritual infatuation judicially inflicted upon them; that the judgment which is written might be fulfilled in them, *God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lye*, 2 Thes. 2. 11.

And yet more amazing is that stroke of God upon multitudes of vain and formal professours even in the Reformed Protestant Churches; where no man is restrained from searching the Scriptures; nay, where men are so frequently and earnestly pressed from Sabbath to Sabbath to examine themselves, and prove their own work, that yet so many are content to leave all at hazard and without any more ado or farther search in the matter, credit the report of their own deceitful hearts, & take all for granted without due tryal or examination of the matter.

Sure!

Surely, no one thing ſends down more ouls daily to hell out of the profeſſing world, han this doth. The five fooliſh Virgins (*i. e.* he unprincipled Profeſſours in the Refor-ned Churches) periſhed this way. They took for granted all was well, becauſe they had amps of profeſſion as well as others; and ſaw ot the cheat, till the cry was heard at mid-ight, and their unfurniſhed Lamps went ut, *Matth.* 25.

2. *Secondly*, The promiſes of ſalvation are ade over to tryed grace, and ſuch only as ill endure the tryal: So James 1. 12. *Bleſſed the man that endureth temptation: for when e is tryed he ſhall receive the Crown of life hich God hath promiſed to them that love him:* e muſt be firſt tryed, and then crowned. *a man ſtrive for maſteries, yet is he not Crown-d; except he ſtrive lawfully*, 2 Tim. 2. 5. he anifeſtly alludes to the *Roman Games* to hich there were Judges appointed, to ſee at no foul play were offered contrary to e Law for wreſtling: and where it was und, the Crown was denyed them. Not to im that ſets forth in the morning with re-lution and gallantry, but to him that holds t till the evening of his life, is the pro-iſe made, Matth. 10. 22. *He that endureth the end ſhall be ſaved*: ſo Rom. 2. 7. *To em who by patient continuance in well doing k for glory and honour, and immortality; eter-*

nal life: and once more, Heb. 3. 15. *We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence, ſtedfaſt unto the end.* So that if you ſhould endure ſome few ſlighter troubles, and faint at laſt; give out when a cloſer tryal befals you; all your labours and ſufferings are in vain. Sincerity and final perſeverance are the conditions of all ſpecial promiſes.

3. *Thirdly*, Every mans graces and duties muſt be tryed and weighed by God in the great day; and if they cannot endure theſe leſſer tryals, to which God expoſes them now, how will they endure that ſevere and exact tryal to which he will bring them then? No man can ſearch his own heart with that exactneſs in this world, as God will ſearch it in the world to come.

I may ſay in this caſe to you as the Lord ſpake to *Jeremiah*, cl. ap. 12. 5. *If thou haſt run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee; then how canſt thou contend with horſes? and if in the land of peace wherein thou truſtedſt, they have wearied thee; then how wilt thou do in the ſwelling of Jordan?* This was ſpoken to encourage the *Prophet* to conſtancy in his work; and as if the Lord had ſaid, O *Jeremy*, do the ſtrivings of the men of *Anathoth* thine own Town, diſhearten thee? pluck up thy ſpirits and faint not; there are harder Tryals than theſe that thou muſt undergo

go at *Jeruſalem*: theſe are no more to what is coming, than the running with footmen, is to contending with horſes: or the paſſing a ſmall Rivulet, to the ſwellings of *Jordan*.

To allude to this, If our graces and duties cannot bear theſe lighter tryals, if a little lift of proſperity, or lighter ſtroke of adverſity diſcover ſo much falſeneſs, rottenneſs, pride, and ſelfiſhneſs in the heart: If we cannot reſiſt the motions of corruptions, but yield our ſelves to obey ſin in the luſts of it: If we can neither keep our hearts with God in duties, nor mourn for our wanderings from him: If a few ſcoffs from wicked tongues, or tryals of perſecution from the hands of men will cauſe us to faint in the way, and turn back from following the Lord; what ſhall we do when he comes whoſe fan is in his hand, and who will throughly purge his floor, *Mat.* 3. 12. who will try every mans work as by fire, 1 *Cor.* 3. 13. ſearch the ſecrets of all hearts, *Rom.* 2. 16. weigh every man to his ounces and drachms? Surely we can take little comfort in that which is ſo unable to bear the ſevere tryals of that day, that it cannot ſtand before the ſlighter Tryals of this day.

4. *Fourthly*, True grace is willing to be tryed, and nothing is more deſirable to an upright ſoul than to know his own condition. If therefore we ſhun the tryal, and are

loth to ſearch our ſelves, or be ſearched by the Lord, our condition is ſuſpicious, and we can take little comfort in it. It was *Davids* earneſt deſire, *Pſal.* 139. 23. that God would throughly ſearch his heart and reins, and ſee if there were any way of wickedneſs in him: falſe grace is ſhy of Gods eye; it cares not to be examined; but this is the delight of ſincere ones: *every one that doth evil hateth the light, leſt his deeds ſhould be reproved; but he that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifeſt, that they are wrought in God,* John 3. 20, 21.

The reaſon is plain why Hypocriſie cannot endure to come to the Touchſtone and teſt, for Hypocrites having a ſecret conſciouſneſs of their own guilt & unſoundneſs, know that by this means their vain confidence would quickly be confuted, and all their reputation for Religion blaſted: but O if men dare not ſtand before the word, as it is now opened and applyed by Miniſters; how will they ſtand when it ſhall be opened and applyed in another manner by Jeſus Chriſt?

O profeſſour, if thy condition be good, thy heart right, thou wilt deſire to know the very worſt of thy ſelf; and when thou haſt made the deepeſt ſearch thou canſt, thou wilt ſtill fear thou haſt not been ſevere enough, and impartial enough to thy ſelf: nothing

will

will give thee more content than when thou feeleſt the word dividing thy ſoul and ſpirit, thy joynts and marrow: nothing ſo much comforts thee under, or after an affliction, as the diſcovery it hath made of thy heart, thou wilt ſeem to feel with what affections thoſe words came from the Prophets lips, Jer. 12. 3. *But thou O Lord knoweſt me, thou haſt ſeen me, and tryed my heart towards thee.* O what a freſhing ſweetneſs will ſtream through thy heart; and all the powers of thy ſoul, when thou canſt make the like appeal to God with like ſincerity! And certainly without ſuch a diſpoſition of ſpirit towards the tryal of our graces, we can have little evidence of the truth of them.

CHAP. XI.

Containing divers practical inſtructive Inferences from this doctrine, with a ſerious exhortation to ſelf-tryal, and through examination.

SECT. I.

Infer. 1. ARe there ſuch variety of tryals appointed to examine the ſincerity of mens graces, *how great a vanity then is Hypocriſie, and to how little purpoſe do men endeavour to conceal and hide it!* We ſay, *murder*, will out, and we may as confidently affirm *hypocriſie* will out. When *Rebekah* had

laid the plot to diſguiſe her ſon *Jacob*, and by perſonating his brother to get the bleſſing; *Jacob* thus objects againſt it, *My Father peradventure will feel me, and I ſhall ſeem to him as a deceiver; and I ſhall bring a curſe upon me, and not a bleſſing*, Gen. 27. 12. as if he ſhould ſay; but what if my Father detect the cheat, how then ſhall I look him in the face? how ſhall I eſcape a curſe? After the ſame manner every upright ſoul ſcares it ſelf from the way of Hypocriſie. If I diſſemble, and pretend to be what I am not: my Father will find me out. Ah there is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death that can conceal the the Hypocrite: but out it will come at laſt, let him uſe all the art he can to hide it. Oſtentimes God diſcovers him by the tryals he appoints in this world, and men in that day ſhall *return and diſcern betwixt the righteous and the wicked; between him that ſerveth God, and him that ſerveth him not*, Mal. 3. 18. but if he make an hard ſhift to get by a private way to hell, carrying this comfort with him to the laſt ſtep; that no body knows or thinks he is gone thither; yet there will be a day when God will ſtrip him naked before the great aſſembly of Angels and men, and all ſhall point at him and ſay,

Loe this is the man that made not God his hope; this is he that wore a garment of profeſſion to deceive, but God hath now ſtript him out

out of it, and all men see what he is: for, *there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hid that shall not be known*: Matth. 10. 26. and the *Apostle* assures us, 1. Tim. 5. 24,25. *that they that are otherwise cannot be hid*: if mens works be not good, it's impossible they should be hid long: a gilded piece of brass may pass from hand to hand a little while; but the touchstone will discover the base metal: if that do not, the fire will.

O sinners, away with your Hypocrisie, be honest, sincere, plain, and hearty in Religion; if not, confusion of face shall be your recompence from the Lord, that is what you shall get by it.

Infer. 2. Secondly, Are there such tryals appointed and permitted by the Lord for the discovery of his peoples sincerity in this world, *then let none of Gods people expect a quiet station in this world*: certainly you shall meet with no rest here: you must out of one fire into another, and it is a merciful condescension of the Lord to poor creatures, thus to concern himself for their safety and benefit: *what is man that thou shouldst magnifie him? and that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him? that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment?* Job 7. 17, 18.

O 'tis a great deal of honour put upon a poor

poor worm, when God will every moment try him and visit him: it argues the great esteem the Goldsmith hath of his gold, when he will sit by the Furnace himself, and order the fire with his own hand: when he pries so often, and so curiously into the fining pot, to see that none of his precious metal upon which he sets his heart be lost.

Think it not then a debasing to you, to be so often exposed to tryals: if God did not value you highly, he would not try you so frequently: what would become of you, if your condition here should be more settled and quiet than now it is? I believe you find dross enough in your hearts after all the fires into which God hath cast you: surely there is filth enough in the best of Gods people to take all this: it may be a great deal more trouble than they have yet met with: we fancy it a brave life to live at ease, and if we meet with long respites and intervals of tryal than usual, we are apt to say, we shall never be moved, as *David* did, *Psal.* 30. 6. or we shall dye in our nest as it is, *Job* 29. 18. our hard and difficult days are over, but woe to us if God should give us the desire of our hearts in this: see what the temper of those mens spirits is, that meet with no changes, Psal. 55, 19. *Because they have no changes, therefore they have not God*: O it's better to be preserved sweet in *brine*, than to rot in *honey*.

Infer. 3.

Infer. 3. *Thirdly, Let none boast in a carnal confidence of their own strength and stability*; you are yet in a state of tryal: hitherto God hath kept you upright in all your tryals, bless God but boast not: you are but feathers in the wind of temptation, if God leave you to your selves. *Peter* told Christ (and doubtless he spake no more than he honestly meant) *though all men forsake thee yet will not I*: and you know what he did when the hour of his tryal came: *Matth.* 26. 35. *Angels* left to themselves have fallen: it's better be a *humble worm*, than a *proud Angel*.

Ah how many *Pendletons* will this professing age shew, if once God bring us to the fiery tryal? let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall: you have not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin: none stand upon firmer ground, than those that see nothing in themselves to stand upon: he that leans upon his own arm, usually benums it, and makes it useless.

Infer. 4. *Fourthly*, Doth God kindle so many fires in *Sion*, and set his Furnaces in *Jerusalem* to discover and separate the dross from the gold, *how contrary are those men to God that allow, yea and prize the dross of Hypocrisie which God hates, and stick not to make the holy God a patronizer and countenancer of it in the hearts and lives of men!*

It is amazing to read what Popish pens have

have impudently written about this matter *Sylveſter* puts the queſtion, whether it be a ſin to make a falſe ſhew of *ſanctity*? and anſwers it thus: If it be for the honour of God, and profit of others, it is no ſin: nay, they have a reverence for hypocriſie as an holy Art. *Vincentius* ſpends a whole Chapter in commendation of the hypocriſie of St. *Dominick*; and entitles it, *de ſancta ejus hypocriſi*, (*i. e.*) of the holy hypocriſie of that Saint: reckoning it among his commendations, that he had the art of diſſembling. And yet one peg higher, A Religious perſon (ſaith another) that feigns himſelf to have more holineſs than he hath, that others may be edified, ſins not but rather merits.

A ſum. adv. ſimulatio. n. 4.

Roſella in v. Hypocriſis. n. 1.

Bluſh O heavens! that ever ſuch factors for hell ſhould open and vend ſuch ware as this in the publick market, and invite the world to Hypocriſie, as that which makes for the glory of God, the edification of men, and a work meritorious in the Hypocrite himſelf. This is the doctrine of devils indeed.

Infer. 5. *Fifthly*, If it be ſo, that all grace muſt come to the teſt, and be tryed as gold in the fire, even in this world: *how are all men concerned to lay a ſolid foundation at firſt, and throughly deliberate the terms upon which they*

they close with Christ, and engage in the profession of his name. Which of you saith *Christ intending to build a Tower sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost?* Luk. 14. 28. if some men had sate down at first and pondered the conditions and terms of Christ, they had not sate down now discouraged and tryed in the way. The Apostle *Paul* went to work at another rate: he accounted all but dung and dross for Christ, *Phil.* 3. 8. and was of the same mind, when the actual tryal came; for then he tells us, *he counted not his life dear unto him*, Acts 20. 24. And the Apostle *Peter* admonishes believers *not to think it strange concerning the fiery tryal which was to try them*, 1 Pet. 4. 21. *q. d.* let none of these things be surprisals to you, you were told before-hand what you must trust to: every Christian must be a *Martyr*, at least in the disposition and resolution of his heart.

O that men would ballance the advantages and disadvantages of Religion, & throughly ponder the matter in their deepest thoughts: to the test you must come: the rain will fall, & the storm beat upon your buildings, look carefully therefore to the foundations.

Infer. 6. *Sixthly* and Lastly, *Learn from this point the unavoidableness of scandals and offences in the way of Religion*; for if there be a necessity of tryal, there is also a necessity of scandal. *It must needs be that offences come,*

come, Luke 17. 1. Why must it needs be? the reason is evident, all must come to the tryal, and all are not able to beat it. Our Lord tells us, *Matth.* 24. 8, 9, 10. of a day of great straits and perplexity coming: *and then* (saith he) *shall many be offended.* The day of tryal is the day of scandal: by these offences some are put a searching themselves, and some fall a censuring all others; but the holy God brings about his end both wayes, in them that are saved and in them that perish.

SECT. II.

WEll then, if it be so that all must into the furnace, let every man try his own work, Examine your selves, professours, search your hearts, commune with your reins: nothing more concerns you in all the world than this doth. O that you would be more in your closets, and oftner upon your knees: O that you would look into the Bible, then into your hearts; & then to God, saying with *David, search me O God and know my heart; prove me, and try my reins; and see if there be any way of iniquity in me:* never did Religion thrive in the world since mens heads have been so over-heated with Notions and Controversies, and their hearts so sensibly cooled in their closet work. I have elsewhere more largely pressed this duty

duty upon the professours of this generation, and thither shall refer the Reader for the present to see the necessity and importance of this work.

See my *Saint indeed*, p. 191, 192, 193, &c.

Here I shall only urge the duty of self-tryal by some pressing Motives, and awakening Considerations.

Motive 1. And the first shall be the exceeding difficulty of this work: difficulty in some cases may be a discouragement, but where the matter is of absolute necessity as it is here; nothing provokes more to diligence; *strive* (saith our Lord) *to enter in at the strait gate, for many will seek to enter in and shall not be able*, Luke 13. 24. A double difficulty is found attending this work of self-tryal. Difficulty in bringing the heart to it, and difficulty in the right and successful management of it: who find it not hard to perswade his heart to such work as this? nature declines it, flesh and blood relish it not: it's one of the great severities in Religion: 'tis no easie thing to bring a man and his own heart together.

It is in this case as in the study of *Geography*, we are more inquisitive to know, and delighted when we discover the rarities of forraign Countreys, and strange things in the remote parts of the world; than those of our own native Countrey. I fear there be

be many professours of Religion that can spend day after day in hearing, & love to be disputing fruitless controversies, that never spent one day in searching what influence all those Sermons they have heard, have had upon their hearts, or in rightly stating & determining that great Controversie, in whose right and possession their souls are, & which way they shall go assoon as death hath divided them from those mortal bodyes; yea, I doubt many sinful hours are spent in praying into, reporting and censuring the failings of others, and not one hour faithfully imployed in judging their own hearts before the Lord: O men had rather be about any other work than this: there's no pleasure in it to the flesh.

And yet how difficult soever it be to bring our hearts to the work, it's certainly much more difficult to manage it successfully, and bring the great question of our sincerity to a clear result and issue. O how many upright hearts have sate close to this work many a year, and lifted up many a cry to heaven, and shed many a secret and undissembled tear about it; and yet still are in the dark, and their minds greatly perplext, and filled with fear about it: what would they not do, what would they not suffer? what pleasant enjoyment would they not gladly part with to arrive at the desire of

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their souls, the full assurance of their sincerity! It was the saying of a pious woman, I have born (said she) seven Children, & they have cost me as dear as ever Children did cost a Mother; yet would I be content to endure all that sorrow over again, to be assured of the love of God to my soul.

Motive 2. *Secondly,* And as the work is full of difficulty, so the discovery of your sincerity will be full of sweetness, and joy unspeakable: it will never repent you that you have prayed and mourned, that you have trembled and feared, that you have searched and tryed: nay, it will never repent you that God hath tryed you by thousands of sharp afflictions and deep sufferings; if after all, your sincerity may be fully cleared up to the satisfaction of your souls; for in the same day your sincerity shall be cleared, your title to Christ will be made as clear to your souls as your sincerity is: you may then go to the promises boldly, and take your own Christ into the arms of your faith, and say, *my beloved is mine, and I am his*: yea, you may be confident it shall be well with you in the Judgment of the great day, for *God will not cast away the upright man*, Job 8. 20. if the word clear you now, it cannot condemn you then.

O what an ease is it to the soul when the fears and doubts that hanged about it are gone!

gone! when a man ſees what he is, & what he hath in Chriſt and the promiſes; and what he hath to do; even to ſpend the time betwixt this and Heaven in admiring the grace of God that hath delivered him from the ruining miſtakes and miſcarriages by which ſo great a part of the profeſſing world periſh to all eternity.

Motive 3. *Thirdly*, The deep concernment of your ſouls in the matter to be tryed, ſhould awaken you to the utmoſt diligence about it. The tryals of men for their life, at humane bars, is but a trifle to this: 'tis your eternal happineſs that ſtands or falls with your ſincerity.

It's ſaid in the tryal of opinions, that if a man ſuperſtruct hay or ſtubble upon the foundation, he ſhall ſuffer loſs, yet he himſelf may be ſaved, 1 *Cor.* 3. 12. but if Hypocriſie be in the foundation, there is no ſuch relief, there is no poſſibility of ſalvation in that caſe.

Ah Reader, thou muſt be caſt for ever according to the integrity or hypocriſie of thy heart with God. Summon in then all the powers of thy ſoul, bring thy thoughts as cloſe as it is poſſible to bring them to this matter: if there be any ſubject of conſideration able to drink up the ſpirits of a man, here it is: never was time put to an higher improvement, never were thoughts ſpent upon

on a more important buſineſs than this is: happy is the man that reſcues the years, months, dayes, yea, the very moments of his life from other imployments, to conſecrate them unto this ſolemn, awful, and moſt important buſineſs.

Motive 4. *Fourthly*, How evidential will it be of your ſincerity, when you are willing to come to the tryal of your own hearts!

Suppoſe your doubts and fears ſhould in ſome degree remain with you, yet in this you may take ſome comfort, that if Hypocriſie be in your heart, it is not there by conſent: you are not loth to rich and come to the tryal, becauſe like *Rachel* you ſit upon your *Idols*: certainly it is a good ſign thy heart is right, when it is filled with ſo much fear leſt it ſhould be falſe: you know all the *diſciples* ſaid, Maſter, Is it I: before *Judas* who was the *Traytor* ſpake a word. *Laſt of all* (ſaith the text) *Judas ſaid is it I?* our willingneſs to be tryed, is a good ſign that the deſire of our ſouls is to be right with God.

Motive 5. *Fifthly*, Conclude it to be your great advantage to be throughly tryed, whatever you be found to be in the tryal: if you be found ſincere, you are richly rewarded for all your pains and labour: never did that man repent of digging and toyling, that after all hit upon the rich vein that he digged for: what is a vein of gold to a vein of ſincerity!

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If upon search you find the contrary, a false Hypocritical unsound heart, yet in that very sad discovery you meet with the greatest advantage that ever you had in your lives for salvation. This discovery is your great advantage: for now your vain confidence being over-turned, and your ungrounded hopes destroyed; you lye open to the stroke of a deep and effectual conviction of your sin and misery, which is the introductive mercy to all other mercies to your souls and surely till you come to that, to give up your false hopes, and quit your vain pretensions: there is no hope of you. Christ told the *Pharisees*, Matth 21. 31. *Publicans* and Harlots enter into the Kingdom of Heaven before you: *Publicans* were the worst sort of *men*, and *harlots* the worst sort of *women*, and yet they stood in a fairer way for heaven than the Hypocritical *Pharisees*, because conviction had easier access to their consciences: they had not those defences and pleas of duty and strictness to ward off the word that the self-couzening Pharisees had.

I may say of your vain and groundless hopes, as Christ in another sense said to the officers that came to seize him in the garden, *if you seek me, let these go their way.* So 'tis here, if you expect *Christ* and salvation by him; let your vain confidences go their way: away with your masques and vizards

ſever you expect to ſee Chriſt. O 'tis your happineſs to have all theſe things ſtript off, and your nakedneſs and poverty diſcovered, that you may be rich as the Text ſpeaks.

Motive 6. Sixthly, Conſider how near the day of Death and Judgment approach you. Oh theſe are ſearching dayes wherein you cannot be hid: will your conſciences, think you, be put off in a dying day as eaſily as they are now? no, no; you know they will not.

I have heard of a good man that conſumed not only the greateſt part of the day, but very conſiderable part of the night alſo in prayer to the great weakening of his body; and being asked by a relation why he did ſo, and prayed to favour himſelf, he returned this anſwer, O *I muſt dye, I muſt dye*: plainly intimating, that ſo great is the concernment of dying in a clear aſſured condition, that 't is richly worth the expence of all our time and ſtrength to ſecure it.

You know alſo that after death the Judgement, *Heb.* 9. 27. you are haſtening to the Judgement of the great and terrible God. Death will put you into his ballance to be weighed exactly: and what gives the ſoul a louder call to ſearch it ſelf with all diligence, whileſt it ſtands at the door of eternity, and its turn is not yet come to go before that awful Tribunal? O that theſe conſidera-

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tions might have place upon our hearts!

CHAP. XII.

Containing divers helps for the clearing of Sincerity and discovery of Hypocrisie.

SECT. I.

YOu see of what importance the du of self-examination is, how many thin put a necessity and a solemnity upon th work. Now in the close of all, I would o fer you some helps for the due managemen thereof, that is as far as I can carry it, th Lord perswade your hearts to the diligen and faithful application and use of them The general rules to clear sincerity a those that follow.

Rule 1.

We may not presently conclude we are in t state of Hypocrisie, because we find some workin of it, and tendencies to it in our spirits: the be gold hath some dross and alloy in it. Hyp crisie is a weed naturally springing in ground, the best heart is not perfectly cle free of it: it may be we are stumbled wh we feel some workings or grudgings of t disease in our selves, and looking into su Scriptures as these, Joh. 1. 47. *Behold an*

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raelite indeed, in whom there is no guile: and Psal. 32. 1. *Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.*

This I say may stumble some upright soul, not understanding in what an allayed and qualified sense those Scriptures are to be understood: for by a *Spirit without guile*, is not understood a person absolutely free from all deceitfulness, and falseness of heart; this was the sole *prerogative* of the *Lord Jesus*, who was separated from sinners, in whose mouth was no guile found: in whom the Prince of this world in all his tryals and attempts upon him found nothing: but we must understand it of reigning and allowed Hypocrisie: there is no such guile in any of the Saints: distinguish the presence from the predominance of hypocrisie, and the doubt is resolved.

Rule 2.

Every true ground of humiliation for sin, is not a sufficient ground for doubting and questioning our estate and condition.

There be many more things to *humble* us upon the account of our *infirmity*, than there are to *stumble* us upon the account of our *integrity*: it is the sin and affliction of some good souls to call their condition in question, upon every slip and failing in the course of

their obedience. This is the way to debar our ſelves from all the peace and comfort of the Chriſtian life: we find that *Joſeph* was once minded to put away *Mary* his Eſpouſed Wife, not knowing that the holy thing which was conceived in her was by the Holy Ghoſt. It is the ſin of Hypocrites to take *braſs* for *gold*, and the folly of Saints to call their *gold*, *braſs*: be as ſevere to your ſelves as you will, alwayes provided you be juſt: *there is that maketh himſelf rich, and yet hath nothing; and there is that maketh himſelf poor, and yet hath great riches*, Prov. 13. 7. *Hiram* called the Cities *Solomon* gave him *Cabul* dirty, for they pleaſed him not, 1 *Kings* 9. 13. 'tis but an ill requital, an ungrateful return to God, for the beſt of mercies, to undervalue them in our hearts, and be ready upon all occaſions to put them away as worth nothing.

Rule 3.

A ſtronger propenſion in our Nature, and more frequent incidence in our practice to one ſin than another; doth not preſently infer our hypocriſie, and the unſoundneſs of our hearts in Religion. 'Tis true, every Hypocrite hath ſome way of wickedneſs: Some *peccatum in deliciis*, iniquity that he delights in, and rolls as a ſweet morſel under his tongue; ſome luſt that he is not willing to part with, nor

can

can endure that the knife of mortification ſhould touch it, and this undoubtedly argues the inſincerity and rottenneſs of his heart: and it is true alſo, that the nature and conſtitution of the moſt ſanctified man inclines him rather to one ſin than to another, though he allow himſelf in none; yea, though he ſet himſelf more watchfully againſt that ſin than another, yet he may ſtill have more trouble and vexation, more temptation and defilement from it than any other.

As every man hath his proper gift one after this manner and another after that, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 7. 7. ſo every man hath his proper ſin alſo, one after this manner, and another after that: for it is with original ſin, as it is with the juice or ſap of the earth, which though it be the common matter of all kinds of fruits, yet it is ſpecificated according to the different ſorts of plants and ſeeds it nouriſhes: in one it becomes an *apple*, in another a *Cherry*, &c. Juſt ſo it is in Original Corruption, which is turned into this or that temptation and ſin, according to this or that conſtitution or employment it finds us in: one it's Paſſion, in another Luſt, in a third Covetouſneſs, in a fourth Levity, and ſo on. Now I ſay the frequent aſſaults of this ſin, provided we indulge it not, but by ſetting double guards labour to keep our ſelves from our *own iniqui-*

ty, as *David* did, *Psal.* 18. 23. will not infer the hypocrisie of our hearts.

Rule 4.

A greater backwardness and indisposedness to one duty rather than another, doth not conclude the heart to be unsound and false with God, provided we do not inwardly dislike and disapprove any duty of Religion, or except against it in our agreement with Christ, but that it riseth meerly from the present weakness and distemper we labour under.

There be some duties in Religion, as sufferings for Christ, bearing sharp reproofs for sin, *&c.* that even an upright heart, under a present distemper may find a great deal of backwardness and lothness to; yet still he consents to the Law that it is good, is troubled that he cannot comply more cheerfully with his duty: and desires to stand compleat in all the will of God: perfection is his aim, and imperfections are his sorrows.

Some Christians have much ado to bring their hearts to fixed solemn meditation, their hearts fly off from it, but this is their burden that it should be so with them. Truth is, it is a very dangerous sign of Hypocrisie when a mans zeal runs out in one chanel of obedience only, and he hath not a respect to all Gods Commandments, as *Physicians* observe, the sweating of one part of the body

when

when all the reſt are cold is *ſymptomatical*, and argues an ill habit: but whileſt the ſoul heartily approves all the will of God, and ſincerely deſires to come up to it, & mourns for its backwardneſs and deadneſs to this or that duty, and this is not fixed, but occaſional under ſome preſent indiſpoſition out of which the ſoul riſeth by the ſame degrees, as ſanctification riſeth in him, and the Lord comes in with renewed ſtrength upon him; this I ſay may conſiſt and is very ordinarily found to be the caſe of upright-hearted ones.

Rule 5.

The glances of the eye at ſelf-ends in duties, whileſt ſelf is not the weight that moves the wheels, the principal end and deſign we drive at, and whileſt thoſe glances are corrected and mourned for; do not conclude the heart to be unſound and Hypocritical in Religion: for even among the moſt deeply ſanctified, few can keep their eye ſo ſteady and fixed with pure and unmixed reſpects to the glory of God, but that there will be (alas too frequently) ſome by-ends inſinuating and creeping into the heart.

Theſe like the fowls ſeize upon the ſacrifice, let the ſoul take what pains it can to fray them away. It's well that our High-Prieſt bears the iniquities of our holy things

for us: *Peter* had too much regard to the pleasing of men, and did not walk with that upright foot towards the Gentile Christians and the believing Jews in the matter of liberty as became him, *Gal.* 2. 13, 14. for which, as *Paul* saith, he ought to be blamed and did blame him; but yet such a failing as that in the end of his duty did not condemn him. In publick performances there may be too much vanity, in works of charity too much ostentation, these are all workings of Hypocrisie in us, and matters of humiliation to us, but whilest they are disallowed corrected and mourned over, are consistent with integrity.

Rule 6.

The doubts and fears that hang upon and perplex our spirits about the hypocrisie of our hearts do not conclude that therefore we are what we fear our selves to be. God will not condemn every one for an hypocrite that suspects, yea, or charges himself with Hypocrisie. Holy *David* thought his heart was not right with God, after that great slip of his in the matter of *Uriah*, and therefore begs of God to renew a right spirit in him, *Psal.* 51. 10, 11, 12. his integrity was indeed wounded and he thought destroyed by that fall.

Holy Master *Bradford* so vehemently doubted the sincerity of his heart, that he subscribed

subscribed some of his Letters (as Master *Fox* tells us) *John Bradford the Hypocrite*, a very *painted Sepulchre*: and yet in so saying he utterly misjudged the state and temper of his own soul.

SECT. II.

WEll then, let not the upright be unjust to themselves in censuring their own hearts: they are bad enough, but let us not make them worse than they are, but thankfully own and acknowledge the least degrees of grace and integrity in them: and possibly our uprightness might be sooner discovered to us, if in a due composure of spirit, we would sit down and attend the true answers of our own hearts to such questions as these are.

Question 1.

Do I make the approbation of God or the applause of men the very end and main design of my Religious performances; according to 1 *Thes.* 2. 4 *Col.* 3. 23. Will the acceptation of my duties with men satisfie me, whether God accept my duties and person or not?

Quest. 2.

Is it the reproach and shame that attends sin at present, and the danger and misery that

will follow it hereafter, that restrains me from the Commission of it? or is it the fear of God in my soul, and the hatred I bear to sin as it is sin? according to *Psal.* 19, 12. and *Psal.* 119. 113.

Quest. 3.

Can I truly and heartily rejoyce to see Gods work carried on in the world, and his glory promoted by other hands, though I have no share in the credit and honour of it, as *Paul* did? *Philip.* 1. 18.

Quest. 4.

Is there no duty in Religion so full of difficulty and self-denyal, but I desire to comply with it: and is all the holy and good will of God acceptable to my soul, though I cannot rise up with like readiness to the performance of all duties? according to that pattern, *Psal.* 119. 6.

Quest. 5.

Am I sincerely resolved to Follow Christ and holiness at all seasons, however the aspects of the times may be upon Religion? or do I bear my self so warily, and covertly as to shun all hazards for Religion: having a secret reserve in my heart, to launch out no farther than I may return with safety; contrary to the practice and resolution of upright souls? *Psal.* 116. 3. *Psal.* 44. 18, 19. *Rev.* 22. 11.

Quest. 6.

Queſt. 6.

Do I make no Conſcience of committing ſecret ſins, or neglecting ſecret duties? or am I conſcientious both in the one and other according to the rules and patterns of integrity? *Matth.* 6. 5, 6. *Pſal.* 19. 12.

A few ſuch Queſtions ſolemnly propounded to our own hearts, in a calm and ſerious hour, would ſound them and diſcover much of their ſincerity towards the Lord.

SECT. III.

AND as upright hearts are too apt to apply to themſelves the threats and miſeries of Hypocrites, ſo Hypocrites on the contrary, are as apt to catch hold of the promiſes and priviledges pertaining to believers.

To detect therefore the ſoul damning miſtakes of ſuch deceived ſouls, O that theſe following Rules might be ſtudied & faithfully applyed to their conviction, and recovery!

Rule 1.

It is not enough to clear a man from Hypocriſie, that he knows not himſelf to be an Hypocrite.

All Hypocrites are not deſigning hypocrites; they deceive themſelves, as well as others: *many will ſay to me in that day, Lord, have we not Propheſied in thy name?* &c. *Matth.* 7. 22. Hell will be a meer ſurpriſal to multitudes of Profeſſours: a man may live & dye in a

blind ungrounded confidence of his safe condition, and not fear his ruine, till he begin to feel it.

Rule 2.

Zeal and forwardness in the cause of God, and for the reformation of his worship, will not clear a man from the danger of Hypocrisie. Jehu was a zealous *reformer*, and yet but a painted *Sepulchre*. In the year 1549. Reformation grew so much in reputation even among the *Nobles* and *Gentry* of *Germany*, that many of them caused these five letters *V. D. M. I. Æ.* being the initial letters of these words, *verbum domini manet in æternum*, (i. e.) *the word of the Lord abideth for ever*; to be wrought or embroidered, or set in plates, some upon their *Cloaks*, and others upon the sleeves of their Garments; to shew to all the world, (saith my Author) that forsaking all Popish Traditions they would now cleave to the pure doctrine and discipline of the eternal word.

John Wolfe, lect. memor. To. 2. ad An. 1549.

And no doubt they would have been as good as their word, if what was *embroidered* on their *cloaks*, had been *engraven* on their *hearts*; but *come see my zeal, marrs all.*

Rule 3.

It is no sufficient evidence of a mans own integrity, that he hates hypocrisie in another: for as

as one proud man may hate another, and he that's Covetous himself, will be apt to censure another for being so; (Lusts may be contrary to one another, as well as all of them contrary to grace) so may an hypocrite loath that in another, which yet he alloweth in himself: nay 'tis the policy of some to declaim against the Hypocrisie of others, thereby to hide their own. *Hypocrites* are none of the most modest censurers of others, *Psal.* 35. 16. A Gibe jest seasoned their meat.

Rule 4.

The meer performance of private duties, will not clear a man from Hypocrisie; the influence of education, or support of reputation, or the impulse of a convinced Conscience may induce a man to it; and yet all this while his heart may not be carried thither with hungry and thirsty desires after God: it is not the matter of any duty that distinguishes the sound, and unsound professour; but the motives, designs, and ends of the soul in them.

Rule 5.

The vogue and opinion you have got among Christians, of your sincerity, will not be sufficient to clear you from the danger of Hypocrisie. Christ tells the Angel of *Sardis*, Rev. 3. 1. *Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.* The fall of *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, could never have shaken the faith of the Saints as it did, had they

they not had great credit in the Church, & been men of renown for piety among them.

Rule 6.

Your respects and love to them that are the sincere and upright servants of God, will not clear you from the danger of being Hypocrites your selves: for the bare loving of a Christian is not *Characteristical* and evidential of a mans own Christianity, except he love him *qua talis*, as he is a Christian, or as he belongs to Christ: & so his sincerity becomes the attractive of thy affection. There be a thousand by considerations & respects that may kindle a mans love to the Saints, besides their integrity.

SECT. IV.

WEll then, if thou wouldst indeed see the unsoundness of thy own heart, propound such heart sounding Questions as these to thy self.

Quest. 1.

Do I engage my heart to approach unto God in the course of my duties? or do I go in the round of duties, taking no heed to my heart in them? if so, compare this symptome of thy Hypocrisie with that in 2 *King.* 10. 3. and that *Ezek.* 33. 31, 32.

Quest. 2.

Am I not swai'd and moved by self-interest and carnal respects in the waves of Religion, the accommodation of some worldly interest, or getting a name and reputation of

of Godlineſs? if ſo, how apparently do the ſame ſymptomes of Hypocriſie appear upon my ſoul, which did upon *Judas*, *Joh.* 12. 6. and *Jehn*, 2 *Kings* 9. 13, 14.

Queſt. 3.

Have I not ſome ſecret reſerves in my heart, notwithſtanding that face and appearance of zeal which I put on? certainly if there be any ſin that I cannot part with, any ſuffering for Chriſt which I reſolve againſt in my heart: I am none of his *diſciple*, my heart is not right with God, the ſearcher of hearts himſelf being Judge, *Luke* 14. 26, 27.

Queſt. 4.

What Conſcience do I make of ſecret ſins? do I mourn for a vain heart, wandering thoughts, ſpiritual deadneſs? and do I conſcientiouſly abſtain from the practice of ſecret ſins, when there is no danger of diſcovery, no fear of forfeiting my reputation by it?-is it Gods eye, or mans that awes me from commiſſion of ſin? certainly, if I allow my ſelf in ſecret ſins; I am not of the number of Gods upright people; whoſe ſpirits are of a contrary temper to mine, *Pſal.* 119. 113. and *Pſal.* 19. 12.

SECT. V.

I Will ſhut up all with five or ſix concluding Counſels, (which the Lord impreſs upon the heart of him that writes, and thoſe that ſhall read them) to preſerve and anti-

dote

dote the soul against the dangerous insinuation and Leven of Hypocrisie.

Counsel 1.

Intreat the Lord night and day for a renewed and right Spirit: all the helps and directions in the world will not antidote and preserve you from Hypocrisie, nothing will be found able to keep you right, till sanctification have first set you right, Ezek. 36. 27. *I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes.*

A *Bowle* may keep by a strait line, so long as the impressed force of the hand that delivered it remains strong upon it; but as that wears off, so its motion fails; and its own *Bias* swayes and turns it: a fright of conscience, a pang of warm affection, or the influence of some great example, or a good education may influence an unrenewed soul; and push it on in the way of Religion for a season; but the heart so influenced must and will return to its own natural course again. And I think there wants nothing but time, or a suitable temptation to discover the true temper of many a professours spirit; pray therefore as that holy man did, *Psal.* 119. 80. *Let my heart be sound in thy statutes that I be not ashamed.*

Counsel 2.

Always suspect and examine your ends in what you do: Sincerity and hypocrisie lye much in

in your ends and designs: as they are, so are you. The intentions of the heart lye deep. A man may do the same action to an holy end, and his person and service be accepted with God; which another doing for a corrupt end, it may be reckoned his sin; and both his person and service be abhorred by the Lord: we find two men riding in one Chariot, and both of them concerned in the same expedition; *Jehu* the son of *Nimshi* and *Jonadab* the son of *Rechab*, 2 *Kings* 10. 15, 23. but though the work they engaged in was one and the same, yet the different ends they aimed at, made the same action an excellent duty in *Jonadab*, and an act of vile Hypocrisie in *Jehu*: *idem quod duo faciunt, non est idem*: it was the saying of a good soul, commended for a good action; the work indeed is good, but I fear the ends of it. Self-ends are creeping and insinuating things into the best actions.

Counsel 3.

Scare your selves with the daily fears of the sin, that is in, and the misery that will follow hypocrisie: look upon it as the most odious sin in the eyes of God, and men: to want holiness is bad enough, but to simulate and pretend it when we have it not, is double impiety: to make Religion the most glorious thing in the world, a meer stirrup to preferment, and a covert to wickedness; Oh how

how vile a thing is it! God made Christ a *Sacrifice* for sin, and the Hypocrite will make him a *Cloak* for sin.

And as to the punishments that follow it, they are suitable to the nature of the sin for as hypocrisie is out of measure sinful so the reward and punishment of it, will be out of measure dreadful. *Mat.* 24. 51. *He shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Counsel 4.

Be daily at work in the mortification of those Lusts that breed hypocrisie. It's plain without much sifting, that pride, vain glory, self-love and a worldly heart are the seeds out of which this cursed plant springs up in the souls of men. Dig but to the root, and you shall certainly find these things there; and till the Lord help you to kill and mortifie these, hypocrisie will spring up in all your duties to God, & in all your converses with men.

Counsel 5.

Attend the native voice of your own consciences in the day of sickness, fear or trouble, and take special notice of its checks, or upbraidings; which like a stitch in your side will gird you at such times; Commonly in that lyes your greatest danger: beware of that evil which Conscience brands and marks at such times, whether it be your living in the practice of

some

ſome ſecret ſin, or in the neglect of ſome known duty: theſe frights of Conſcience mark out the corruption wherein your danger moſtly lyes.

Counſel 6. Let us all that profeſs Religion be uniform and ſteady in the profeſſion and practice of it, without politick reſerves, and by-ends.

O take heed of this *Laodicean* neutrality & indifferency which Chriſt hates: be ſure your ground be good, and then be ſure you ſtand your ground. The Religion of time-ſervers is but Hypocriſie: they have ſluices in their Conſciences which they can open or ſhut as occaſion requires: every *Fox* will have at leaſt two holes to his Den, that if one be ſtopt, he may eſcape at the other. The hypocrite poyſeth himſelf ſo evenly in a mediocrity, that as it was ſaid of *Baldwin*, Let *Anthony* win, let *Auguſtus* win, all is one: So let *Chriſt* win, or let *Antichriſt* win, he hopes to make every wind that can blow, ſerviceable to waft him to the port of his own intereſt.

The Hypocrite hath alwayes more of the *Moon*, than of the *Sun*; little light, many ſpots & frequent changes: it's eaſier to him to *bow* to the croſs, than to *bear* the Croſs; to ſin than to ſuffer.

Our own ſtory tells us of a poor ſimple woman that lived both in the reigns of Q. *Mary*, and Q. *Elizabeth*; and would conſtantly,

ly say her prayers both in *Latine* and *English*, that she might be sure to please one side or other; and let God, said she, take which likes him best: what is noted as an act of ridiculous simplicity in her, the time-serving hypocrite accounts a point of deep policy in himself.

The times under *Diocletian* were *Pagan*, under *Constantine*, *Christian*; under *Constantius*, *Arian*; under *Julian*, *Apostate*; and under *Jovian*, *Christian* again: and all this within the space of seventy years, the age of one man. O what shifting, and shuffling was there among the men of that generation! the changes of weather shew the unsoundness of mens bodies, and the changes of times, the unsoundness of their souls.

Christian, if ever thou wilt manifest and maintain thine integrity, be a man but of one design, & be sure that be an honest and good design, to secure heaven whatever becomes of earth: to hold fast integrity, whatever thou art forced to let go for its sake.

Take heed of *pious frauds*: certainly it was the *Devil* that first married those two words together, for they never did nor can agree betwixt themselves, nor was ever such a marriage made in heaven.

Never study to model Religion and the exercises thereof in a consistency with, or subserviency to your fleshly interests: if your

your Religion be but a mock Religion, your reward shall be but a mock heaven, that is, a real hell.

O the vanity and inutility of these projects and designs! men strive to cast themselves into such modes, and stint themselves to such measures of Religion, as they think will best promote, or secure their earthly interests: but it often falls out contrary to their expectation, their deep pollicies are ridiculous follies, they become the grief and shame of their friends, and the scorn and song of their enemies. And often it fares with them, as with him that placed himself in the middle of the Table, where he could neither reach the dish above him, nor that below him, *Esuriunt medii*, &c. and (which is the very best of it) if earthly interests be accommodated by sinful neutrality, and a *Laodicean* indifferency in Religion, yet no good man should once feel a temptation to embrace it, except he think what is wanting in the sweetness of his sleep, may be fully recompenced to him by the stateliness of his bed, and richer furniture of his Chamber; I mean that a fuller and higher condition in the world, can make him amends for the loss of his inward peace, and the quiet repose of a good conscience: these by-ends and self-interests are the little passages through which hypocrisie creeps in upon the Professours of Religion.

O let this be your rejoycing which was *Pauls, the Testimony of your Conscience, that in all sincerity and godly simplicity, not in fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, you have had your Conversations in this world*, 2 Cor. 1.12.

Let that be your daily prayer & cry to heaven, which was *Davids*, Psal. 25. 21. *Let integrity & uprightness preserve me, for I wait on thee.*

Counsel 7. Keep your hearts day & night under the awe of Gods all-seeing eye: remember he beholds all your wayes, and ponders all your thoughts; how covertly soever hypocrisie may be carryed for a time, all must & will out at last, *Luke* 12. 3. secresie is the main inducement to hypocrisie, but it will fall out with the hypocrite, as it did with *Ottocar* the King of *Bohemia*, who refused to do homage to *Rodulphus* the *Emperour*, till at last chastised with war, he was content to do him homage privately in a Tent: but the *Tent* was so contrived by the *Emperours* servants, that by drawing one Cord it was taken all away; & so *Ottocar* presented on his knees doing homage in the view of three Armies.

Reader, awe thy heart with Gods eye, know that he will bring every secret thing into Judgment. Thus did *Job*, & it preserved him, *Job* 31. 1, 4. Thus did *David*, & it preserved him, *Psal.* 18. 21, 22, 23. Thus do thou also, and it will preserve thee blameless and without guile to the day of Christ.

FINIS.

6 JY 53

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